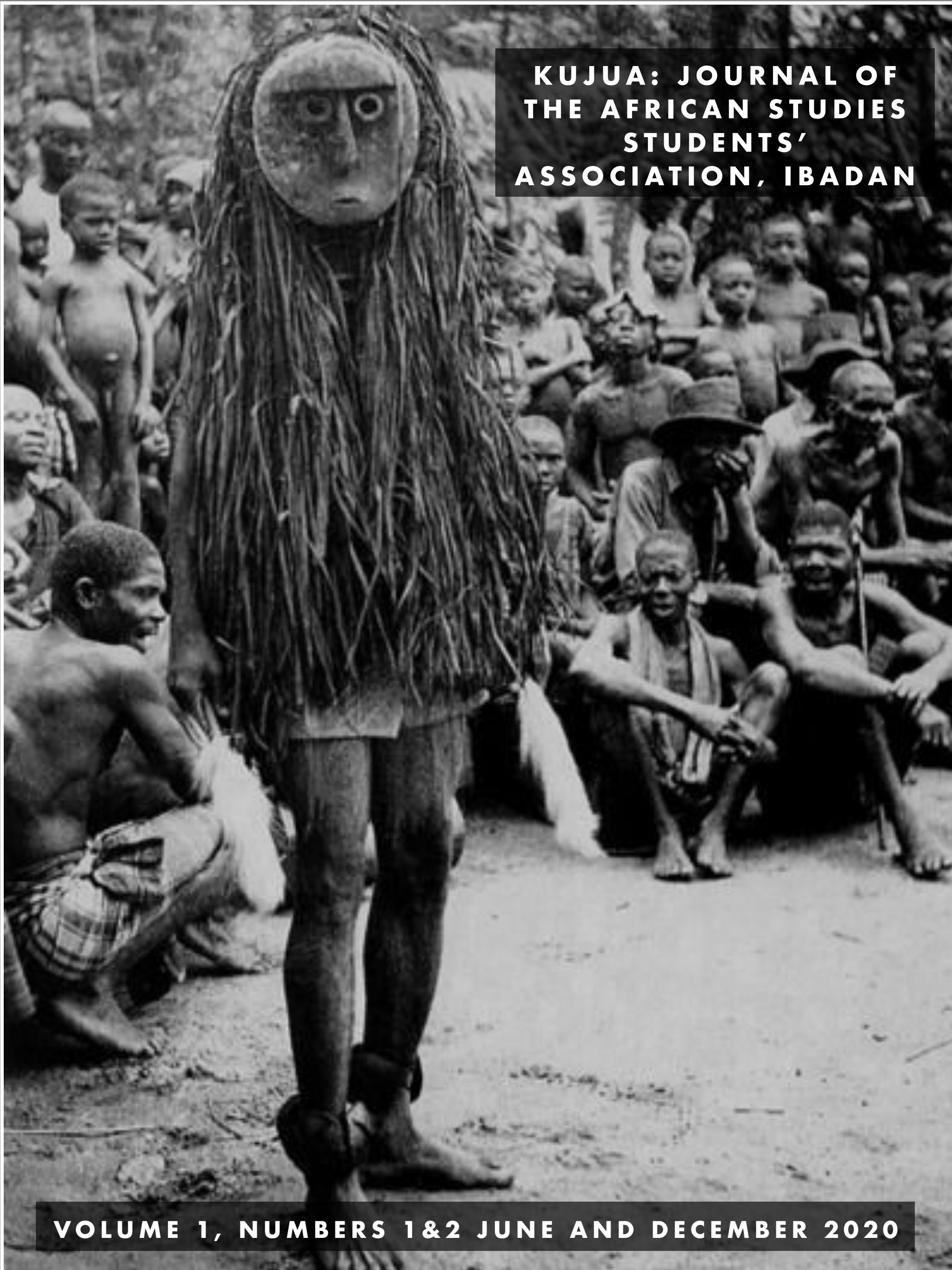

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface to the First Volume **7**

Editorial **9**

1. DEBUNKING THE THIRD WORLD NARRATIVE: Africa in Global politics - **Oluwatomilade Olominu** **11**

2. RUNNING SLOW ON A FAST LANE: Recalibrating Africa's Cultural and Creative Industries Within The Global Creative Economy - **Feyisitan Ijimakinwa** **26**

3. FROM PHYSICAL TO VIRTUAL SPACE: Social Media As An Alternative Place For Solutions To Human Challenges - **Eshalomi, Henrietta** **42**

4. HUMAN TRAFFICKING AS AN INJUSTICE-MOTIVATED SOCIAL DISORDER In Sarah Forsyth's *Slave Girl* And Tina Okpara's *My Life Has a Price* - **Solomon Olusayo Olaniyan, PhD** **59**

5. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN COMMUNITY POLICING IN UMUAHIA, Abia State of Nigeria: Ọkọnkọ society as a model - **Ugochukwu Aniga, PhD** **74**

6. UNMASKING LANGUAGE AS A DETERMINANT OF BORDER SECURITY for Nigeria and Benin - **Allwell Akhigbe** **93**

7. AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT CRISES: THE TRIUMPH OF THE EARLY AFRICANS and the paradox at present - **Mujitaba Liman Arabu, PhD** **112**

8. QUEST FOR IDENTITY: The Bipartite Musical Journey of *Saint Janet* - **Samuel A. Adejube** **127**

9. FILMIC REFLECTION ON PRESSED FREEDOM: Revisiting the Scenic Representations in Tunde Kelani's *Saworoide* - **Oluwatobi Richard Akinde** **143**

10. POSTSCRIPT: PERFORMING IDENTITY, MARGINALITY and otherness in the global backyard - **Ololade Faniyi** **149**

Preface to the First Volume

Few, if any Graduate Studies Associations are home to academic journals in Nigeria. The African Studies Students' Association (ASSA) have deemed it fit to fill a huge gap in the production and dissemination of knowledge about Africa, and in Africa. The conviction to produce a students' oriented journal comes to fore as an attempt to give room for quality papers from various scholars and widen the horizon of knowledge in the continent. It is in this regard that **KUJUA: the Journal of African Studies Students' Association** provides the requisite platform for such activities of various scholars. KUJUA is a Swahili word which literally means 'to know'. It translates to our inquisitiveness of the past and the present knowledge of the African people.

Africa, for all its technological advancement in the past, is behind modern technological development. On one hand, many scholars have argued that the discovery of the 'New World' and the subsequent Atlantic slave trade were the reasons for Africa's backwardness in global development. These scholars further cemented their argument that while these events have great impact on the shape and development of Africa, colonialism was the spark that lighted the tinder of Africa's backwardness in global development. According to them, Europe underdeveloped Africa. On the other hand, quite a number of scholars have argued that the lack of quality leaders in Africa, since independence in the 1960s, is the main reason for Africa's backwardness in global development. These scholars argued that it took the 'Asian Tigers' less than 40 years to attain unrivalled development and economic stability. It is already 60 years since the independence era of most African countries and the identity of the continent is not clear enough in the global arena. Hence, the theme of this maiden edition is 'The People of the Global Backyard': Africa's quest for identity in the 21st century.

The concept of the "backyard" as here used, interrogates the inefficiencies of the traditional and euphemistic terms used to describe Africa and the rest of the developing world. These terms such as periphery and Third World often cast the African experience as a foil to Western experiences, yet this is not necessarily true. Many Africans lead their lives in complete disregard of Western ideals, they take what the modern world gives them, and then thrust upon these uniquely African interpretations. As such, the "backyard" becomes not just a place of lack, but also an extremely creative plane, intentionally demarcated and protective of the African from the caprices of globalisation. As a place of both lack and protection, the "backyard", like Africa itself is self-contradicting.

This edition has eight papers and a postscript well documented about the African people. This edition ranges from topical issues like border and migration to cultural development and the importance of language in the society. It also touches on the issues of illegal migration and child trafficking, security and community policing and finally, the social media as an alternative to orthodox solutions in an ever changing world. The edition has done a great deal to address the African identity and provide its story in well researched and written documents.

In the quest to provide platforms for the emerging scholars in Nigeria and voices for several writers, ASSA executives initiated a monthly program called the African Village Square, where people gather to discuss pertinent issues that concern humanity especially the African continent. So far, the themes for previous editions include the intersect of Fraud and Pop culture in Nigeria, Humanity in the face of extinction before the lockdown began in March. In order to further our quest for knowledge, the blog session of KUJUA will also feature stories, poems, satires and film reviews which will attend to our various themes at a given time. The theme of the first edition is titled Humanity in the face of planetary disaster.

Finally, ASSA will continue to augment the research strength of its parent body, Institute of Africa Studies, IAS and provide the platform for scholars and researchers all over the world to publish their works. We appreciate the efforts of the Institute of French Research in Africa to the success of this project. The organisation and the staff were highly instrumental in all the processes involved in the birth of KUJUA. However, there is still more to be done and the student body will welcome support from organisations, institutions and individuals in the society in our quest to deliver quality research papers on Africa.

Oluwasegun Ajetunmobi

President of the African Studies Students' Association
&
Editor, **KUJUA: Journal of the African Studies Students' Association**

Editorial

Secondary to the prestige of housing its own little journal, the students at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, have come to see that the importance of our journal is in helping publish as many early career researchers as possible. Yet, this is in no way saying that we have been lax with standards pertaining to research, or have found new ways to pass off clear academic foibles as style. Here, the Nigerian student has a space to rebuff in clear terms the most demeaning stereotypes that have dogged their existence. Without the pressures of classes, and of exams, without the sometimes stifling competition of the classroom, the Nigerian student here is inventive, intelligent, inquiring, and has a grasp for theory and a deep understanding for reality.

As a result, we have done away with certain markers of the Academic journal. In place of a page profiling the contributors, each author gets a short note detailing their most important academic facts. In order to encourage researchers to take their initial steps with us, we find the declaration of academic rank, and the embellishments that come naturally with it, may play a role in discouraging student-researchers from publishing. Also, while we prefer the University of Ibadan manual of style, we understand the need for flexibility and are not particularly emphatic about referencing styles.

We are immensely grateful to the mid to late career researchers who have published with us; Dr Ugochukwu Aniga, of the Don Bosco Institute of Philosophy at Ogungbade, Ibadan. Also, Dr Mujitaba Liman Arabu, of the Department of History at Usman Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto, and Dr Solomon Olaniyan, of the Department of English at Osun State University's Osogbo campus. They have been deeply patient and supportive of our work. I am also grateful to Oluwatomilade Olominu of the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, at Ado-Ekiti's Afe Babalola University. Still even more thanks go to our own Henrietta Eshalomi, Feyisitan Ijimakinwa, Samuel Adejube, and Allwell Akhigbe from the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies. With generous support from IFRA-Nigeria, this volume has been produced and made open source, for this we remain in their gratitude. It remains pertinent that students at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, work to keep this journal in print. It is after all, our gift to posterity.

Richard Anyah
Editor-in-Chief, **KUJUA: Journal of the African Studies Students' Association**

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DEBUNKING THE THIRD WORLD NARRATIVE: AFRICA IN GLOBAL POLITICS

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Abstract

The Third World has been used as a term that alludes to the developmental status of most African, Asian, and Latin American countries since the Cold War era. The term, when used, suggests areas in the World with a high rate of poverty, poor infrastructural development, low life expectancy rates, increase in mortality rate, and dwindling and unstable economies. On the other hand, it also points to countries that are marketed by developed countries and subjects of foreign aid. It denotes the countries where 'nothing seems to work', beset by 'hopelessness'. This research traces the trajectory of the Third World narrative, and it identifies the various theoretical explanations that have been given to the Third World as a concept in political science and international relations. It explains that the Third World as a description for African states bears its origin in the cold war era and it is much a creation of western scholars than it is a self-affirmation of the countries in Africa. The author, therefore, asks if this identity of the Third World still fits an emerging Africa in the 21st century, while identifying how this identity has limited the impact and influence of Africa in global politics, and the challenges Africans face by being citizens of this 'Third World'. It concludes on the note that Africa is not to the World a 'backyard' continent, nor a dumping ground, neither are African experiences, and challenges exclusive to the continent. This paper employs existing literature to answer the questions by way of content analysis.

Key words: Third World, Africa, Development, Cold War, Global Politics

Introduction

Before their encounter with the Western World, African communities existed within, and operated different political, economic, social, and religious realities. The political system across Africa had variances. Social life was more communal and simpler than individualistic and complex. Economic activities were based on agricultural practices, hunting, and gathering, mining and simple manufacturing. It has been argued that environmental conditions limited the ability of many pre-colonial African communities' ability to transform nature on a large scale. Thus, they had to survive with what the land and environment supplied per season (Green, 2013).

Industrialisation also had impacts on the continent, as it brought the world to its shores, leading to a renegotiation of the terms of subsistence for most of these communities. The colonialists encountered a different world upon their arrival, their description of these community was that they were primitive, backward, and underdeveloped. It seemed to them that industrialisation had eluded this vast continent (Nyoni, 2015). As such, the industrial revolution widened the technological gap between Africa and the West and further made the conquest of Africa less expensive for the West; it also made this conquest imperative for the Europeans as the continent of Africa was seen as a source of resources for the industrial revolution occurring in Europe. It introduced a new way of life, an unforeseen advancement in technology, the creation of new trade routes, the introduction of new forms of education, new religions, and large-scale infrastructural changes. By the end of World War II, many countries in Asia and Africa were beginning to gain independence from the European and American colonialist, starting with India in 1948. These newly independent countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America had similar challenges with nation-building, the stability of their economies and positioning themselves globally without aligning with either the US-led NATO or USSR-led Warsaw Pact. It was in the course of these that the concept of the Third World emerged in international politics.

The concept of the Third World is often used to describe countries that are poor and economically dependent (Jack, Nkwocha, & Boroh, 2016). It describes, in other terms developing and underdeveloped economies of the Global south. It has been used to differentiate the wealthy countries from the developing countries, the "haves" from the "have nots" and to compare prevailing political systems and practices (Silver, 2015). Originating from Western thought, it points to backwardness or a sense of otherness. It suggests a state of stagnant economic development, and alludes, for instance, to

descriptions of Africa as a 'hopeless continent'[1] Different perspectives abound about the relevance or irrelevance of the concept of the Third World in contemporary discourse. While some schools of thought agree that the term has its relevance when applied to geopolitics and development, others believe that the term has outlived its usefulness, given the absence of a first, and especially a Second World. While others describe a state of dwindling relevance for the concept of the Third World, especially, as some countries have overcome the characteristics traditionally associated with the category.

In this paper, the author poses the question of the relevance of the term "Third World" at a time in history when Africa, as a continent is receiving increasing attention from emerging economies, and is an increasingly important actor in changing global dynamics (Osondu-Oti & Oluwatoki, 2018). The paper examines the current flow of trade and investment (two essential agents of development) and how this has repositioned Africa in the World of States.

Trajectory of The Third World Concept

The origin of the *Third World* is often related to non-alignment, shared colonial pasts, economic dependence, poverty, and backwardness (Randall, 2004). Non-alignment emerged during the Cold War years to separate countries that were not allies of the US and USSR. Thus, the Third World emerged as a description for countries who were neither aligned to NATO (including the USA, Western European Nations and their allies, representing the First World) and the Warsaw Pact (the Communist bloc including the Soviet Union, and their allies) (Smit, 2013). However, this has been criticised, because since the cold war ended there no longer are two global rivals, therefore, since the USSR disbanded, the context for a Third World cannot be validated. Another allusion is made to colonialism as a characteristic of the Third World. Countries in Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and Asia who have shared colonial past are recognised as the Third World.

In this regard, these countries are described as the Third World as they were newly independent and grappled with the challenge of nation and institution building. Randall (2004) however, claims that there are errors in such a line of thought, since not all these countries had the same colonial experience, since, they were not all colonised by the same country. Britain colonised some, others were colonised by France, Germany, the Netherlands, or, a mix of two of these countries. Also, some countries were never colonised; while others who got their independence in the 1800s were submerged into the Third

[1]The Economist in May, 2000 referred to Africa as a hopeless continent. https://www.economist.com/printedition/2000-05-13

World. Thirdly, the Third World was used to describe countries who were developing slowly in economic terms, and have not gotten to the level of the OECD countries. Thus, they are dependent on the West and are a target for economic aid and support from wealthier nations. Arguments to uphold the claims of economic dependency, poverty and backwardness have been countered with examples of countries who have moved up to become First World country; the like of Newly Industrialised Countries, BRICS, and so on. Critics of the relevance of the Third World concept also signify that, countries bearing the characteristics of the Third World are found scattered in various geographical locations in the World, from the Global South, to the Global North (Randall, 2004).

Alfred Sauvy, a French scholar, is credited for developing the term "Third World" to describe emerging new entities in international politics, in an article he titled *"Trois Mondes, Une Planete"* (Three Worlds, One Planet), published in *L'Observateur* in 1952 (Sauvy, 1952). He built the term on the concept of the '*third estate'* prevalent in France, with references to the critical events of that time; the new states emerging from decolonization, two superpowers bickering, and the different systems of universal political and socio-economic conditions threatening the survival of newly independent states in the international community (Solarz, 2012).

Sauvy (1952) introduced the emergence of a new entity that is non-western, different from the first and Second Worlds, but equal. He gave three interpretations; the first being a socio-economic interpretation, which identified these emerging states as underdeveloped. The second interpretation has a political inclination to it. He explained that the Third World was a political unit, or, field on which inter-bloc rivalry occurred, they were the sources of the rivalry between the two superpowers in the Cold War, and at the same time, they were the victims of the Cold War. The third interpretation speaks to the aspiration of the Third World to assert itself as the third pole of influence, independent of, and equal to the already existing world, in contemporary international order (Solarz, 2012).

While opinions and views about the Third World are divergent, it is agreeable that the term became popular following several publications in magazines and journals in the 1950 and beginning of the 1960s. For instance: In 1956 Georges Balandier published an article titled *Le Tiers Monde; Sous-développement et développement* (The Third World: underdevelopment and development)[2]. Then in 1959, French Economist François Perroux founded a journal

[2]Balandier, G. (1956). Le" Tiers Monde": sous-développement et développement. *Population (french edition)*, 737-741. https://www.persee.fr/doc/pop_0032-4663_1956_num_11_4_4800

Tiers Monde. Also, in 1965, Samir Amin published an article titled *Tiers Monde*[3]. Thus, the wave of decolonization at this period gave the Third World interpretations that suggest otherness, independence, and sovereignty. The Third World also suited the newly independent states' anticipation and desire for freedom, equality, and sovereignty in the international community just as the third estate demanded in France years before the term Third World emerged. It signified the expectations of the newly independent states of the roles they would play in international relations, since the concept identified the existence of the third pole of influence in the international world order. All these further contributed to the spread and popularization of the concept (Ibid).

Taking the above into consideration, we can argue that the widespread use of the term, or, reference to it, is linked to economic development academics. The term was consolidated by a developmental description which identified most of the countries in the Third World as impoverished and thus linked the Third World to an imperfect world. This classification has been described to be outdated, insulting and confusing and should be replaced with 'developing countries' since the so-called Third World countries are those who require development in terms of health systems, education, water and electricity, to mention a few. Thus, the use of the term Third World evaluates the reality of the Global South appropriately, as it regards to development. Secondly, as it identifies the Global South with negative connotations and stereotypes, it raises the bar for the First World countries or the Global North. The term also contains a message that highlights the poor condition of the countries concerned, thereby suggesting persecution, exploitation, injustice, and inequality. The term also overlooks wealth inequalities in countries of the Global South. It assumes that everyone is miserable and exploited. The media has also contributed to the popularity of the term Third World as suggesting negativity given their affinity for news bearing images of war-torn zones, starving and diseased children, inadequate infrastructures, and other factors (Solarz, 2012).

Today, the term Third World is used to describe a country that is not developed, compared to some other countries, and at the same time experiences economic, social, political environmental challenges. By its original description, countries like Finland, Sweden, Switzerland who are not aligned either to NATO or the Warsaw Pact are Third World countries, in contrast, these countries cannot be categorised as the Third World using the new interpretation of the Third World as indicating poor and non-industrialised countries. As such, the term is gradually losing its popularity in literature based on this

[3]Amin, S. (1965). Tiers monde http://patrimoinenumeriqueafricain.com:8080/jspui/bitstream/123456789/353/1/Tiers%20monde.pdf

confusion and being replaced with terms such as least developed countries, developing countries and the Global South (World Population Review, 2019).

The use of 'developing countries' to replace 'Third World' also faces criticism because it suggests a hierarchy between countries where the developing countries are at the bottom and the developed area at the top (Sabriyya, 2016). Secondly, it expresses the unequal relationships between colonised countries and the coloniser, and thirdly, suggests stereotypes of backwardness, ignorance, the laziness of people from this so-called developing world (Silver, 2015). Thus, the use of the categorisation of the developing/ developed world has generated criticism and fallout because lumping disparate countries together into the same group is not only misleading but also not useful for any meaningful comparative analysis. In the following sections, the question of the relevance of the application of the Third World will form the focus of the author's discussion.

Is the Term 'Third World' Still Relevant?

Over 60 years after its emergence into political discourse, the question of the continued use and relevance of the Third World is debatable. Some scholars insist that the Third World should not be in use since the end of the Cold War brought about the end of the Second World and the spread of socialist values, they argue that and that globalisation is actively blurring the lines of a divides between the worlds. They also express that the term is now redundant since some of these so-called Third World countries (Brazil, China, India) have developed away from heavy economic dependence and have greatly reduced their levels of poverty. Another category of scholars like Nico Smit believes that the term is still relevant in modern-day use, they group their arguments under three categories; geopolitics, the Third World as a reference point for development in global politics, and global modernity (Dhlamini, 2013).

Using the geopolitical explanation, Nico Smit (2010) expressed that the presence of untapped natural resources remains the common factor amongst countries in this category, and as such distinguishes them from the countries of the Global North. As a reference point for development in global politics, the Third World describes countries left behind in the process leading to global development. Thus, they are third because they remain far behind in economic, political, and socio-cultural development. The global modernity explanation of the relevance of the Third World claims that these countries have still not embraced modernity and must abandon traditions (Dhlamini, 2013). This modernity debate is, however questionable, and raises the issue of the indices for modernity and who sets these indices? If for instance, Africa has not embraced modernity, what are we to say about the

transfer and exchange of technology, and the increased awareness of human rights and eroding traditional practices that are contemporary occurrences in Africa?

Solarz (2012) also express that another group of scholars believe the use of the Third World is not in decline as some literature might suggest; instead, reference is still being made to the Third World in various publications in reputable international journals. They suggest some sort of staggered relevance of the Third World concept. That the continued use of these concepts keeps it alive even though it is now interchanged with words like developing countries or the Global South (Dhlamini, 2013). Some other scholars agree that there is a resurgence of the use of the concept of the Third World. The reason is ascribed to the seemingly increasing unfavourable conditions in the global south marked by underdevelopment. The number three in the hierarchy of things also suggest worse than second or first, thereby corresponding with adjectives such as backward, marginalised, underdeveloped, or worse. Suggestively the linguistic form of the term characterised by the absence of precision provokes negative associations (Solarz, 2012).

Development theories also offer explanations to justify the relevance of the use of the term Third World. Modernisation theory suggests that the use of the term Third World suits countries that have failed to move away from their old traditions of social, political, and economic lifestyle and embrace the modern way of life and values. It describes the Third World as countries left behind by the First World because of an inability to modernise via the use of technology and industrialisation. They suggest that Third World countries have retrogressive traditions and social practices that inhibit growth and development. Modernisation theorist perceives that the presence of poverty, war, famine, economic stagnation, and inability to 'keep up' with technological advancement are characteristics of the Third World made possible by harmful traditions. However, the claims of modernisation theorists are almost irrelevant to contemporary development theory, because many countries like China and Japan have been able to advance their economies despite being traditional societies.

Specific historical literature would equally reveal that China led the World in terms of trade as far back as the 1100s, many centuries before British Imperialism. Modernisation theory has been criticised because it focuses and encourages foreign powers to prescribe the process of Africa's development especially with the emphasis on development aid, while failing to recognise the creativity and initiative of Africans (Matunhu, 2011). World system theory also explains that the World is divided into the core and the periphery. They argue that free trade and international market relations occur within these frameworks of uneven

relations between developed and underdeveloped countries and work to reinforce and reproduce these relations (Halperin, n.d.)

Karakir (2012) identified that indices such as political liberalisation had been used to determine the relevance of the use of the term Third World after the Cold War. A remarkable number of Third World countries have emerged, with weak and robust democracies alike, though it could be argued that most are still struggling with the challenges of a weak political systems. This, however, is not to say that progress is not being made in the consolidation of democratic regimes in the Third World, especially in Africa, particularly with the promotion and the protection of human rights that are taking a leading role in concerns of various regimes. In terms of economic liberalisation that have taken place in the Third World since the end of the Cold War, many countries still experience slow economic growth, low economic diversification, and lack of economic competitiveness.

On the other hand, some Third World countries have been able to use these institutions to overcome their economic problems; for instance, the newly industrialised countries. Perhaps, we could ask then, if this assistance favours some countries more than the others. In terms of security, many Third World countries, especially countries in Africa, still depend on the Global North for armaments and military training, this is because African countries are plagued with various security issues ranging from terrorism to political and ethnic armed conflicts (Karakir, 2012).

Additionally, scholars distinguish between the state dimension of the Third World and the human dimension, often premised on the idea that 'there is a Third World within First World states". The Third World, from the state dimension, refers to those states with little or no impact in global politics and are vulnerable in global markets. On the other hand, the Third World refers to needy individuals, and vulnerability and risk are the defining features of their daily lives, no matter where they are located territorially or geographically, This is to say that in countries like America, Native Americans live in conditions that mirror the conditions in some rural parts of the Third World countries. Similarly, Third World ruling, and elite classes live in high standard comparable to those of people in industrialised countries while the majority live in the Third World conditions (Ibid).

Africa In Global Politics: Is Africa The Backyard of The World?

The concept of the Third World and its denotations of backwardness, otherness and poverty emanated from the Global North. Theories explaining the reason for the underdevelopment of Africa equally originated among Western thinkers, philosophers, and political scientist alike. In the context of this study, we allude to the “backyard” in many of our houses, where

we cultivate different plants and flowers, perhaps rear animals and often time situate our relaxation spot. As such, developed countries perceive Africa as a place for the harvesting of raw mineral materials to fuel their ever-growing economies. These countries see African nations, especially the ones with a significant population like Nigeria hotspots for exploitation. Africa is a fountainhead of resources for most of these developed countries. Thus, the description of Africa as the backyard of the World does not directly suggest backwardness; rather, it presupposes the dependency of the World on Africa, its people, and its resources.

Countries like Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius and Seychelles, Gabon and Botswana have remained the top five wealthiest countries in Africa owing to high Gross Domestic Product (GDP)[4]. If these countries, based on their nominal Gross Domestic Product per capita sit among the "Developed" nations, is it still logical to call them Third World especially when most of the World's mineral resources comes from there? Dearden (2017) thinks that Africa is blessed with plentiful resources, but, the developed countries steal its wealth. Even though money comes into Africa through loans, remittances, and aid, much more money leaves the continent often in the form of dodged taxes by multinational corporations, the profits repatriated by these companies back to their home country. According to the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) in a 2018 report, these developed countries also indulge in illegal logging, fishing and trade in wildlife amounting to an estimated $29 billion in 2017. It, therefore, seems very much like these developed countries gain a lot from the so-called backyard of the World in terms of resources, trade, and investment (Dearden, 2017).

Emerging economies in the World today have also turned their attention to Africa. The BRICS nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa have stakes in Africa by extending their economic and political ties to Africa: this is illustrated in trade statistics that continue to grow at an unprecedented rate. China, for instance, is by far the dominant destination for African exports and source of imports into Africa. The value of trade between China and Africa has increased from $10 billion in 2000 to about $210 billion in 2013. On the other hand, the European Union's total trade with Africa surpasses this with $430 billion in the year 2013. Even with the value of trade at $185 billion in 2018 compared to $115 Billion in 2017, China remains Africa's single largest non-bloc trade partner (CARI, 2019).

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[4]2017 International Monetary Fund supplied this data Equatorial Guinea ($34,865), Mauritius ($21,628), Seychelles ($28,172), Gabon ($19,266) and Botswana ($18,146) http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/richest-african-countries/

Similarly, Africa's trade with India and Brazil also increased to $72 and $27 billion in 2013. However, a cursory look at the trade figures shows that most African trade with China, India, Brazil, and South Africa is concentrated among a small group of African countries. Five countries account for 63% of China's total trade with Africa, with two countries in Southern Africa – South Africa and Angola – accounting for 48% of this trade in 2013. For India, the pattern is the same, with five countries accounting for 67% of its African trade, with Nigeria, South Africa, and Angola account for 53%. Brazil's trade is mainly with three North African countries (36%), Nigeria (34%) and South Africa (10%). South Africa's trade is mainly confined to Southern Africa, Nigeria, and Ghana in the West.[5] In terms of investment, about 4.3% of foreign direct investment from BRICS nations went to Africa in 2011, with their share of investment flows to the rest of Africa reaching 25% in 2020 according to UNCTAD[6] (Tjonneland, 2015).

Thus, Bwalya (2018) thinks that for the first time since the Berlin Conference for the Partition of Africa, and subsequent colonisation by Europeans, Africa is now becoming a rising economic zone, a driving hub of investment and a place that offers excellent economic proceeds. This positive outlook is, however, accredited to Chinese investment in Africa since 2000. To this end, China through its investment in Africa has repositioned the continent in the World of States and given its political economy a positive image by employing its communist ideas, aid provision, grants and investment and utilising its institutions (Bwalya, 2018).

In terms of global urbanisation, Africa is slated to be the World's fastest-growing region and home to the World's youngest population. Its population is projected to double by 2050 with most of this population expected to be found in cities, and consequently increasing the urban population of the continent (Muggah & Hill, 2018). McKinsey in 2017 thus postulates that the population of 100 African cities will be over one million by 2025, one-fifth of the World's people will be living in Africa and as such, the dependency ratio will give way for an increased working-age population that will surpass both India's and China by 2034 (Hattingh, Leke, & Russo, 2017). China's role in this urban development is visible in terms of infrastructural development (launched as part of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2018) including the construction of roads, bridges, and buildings. Chinese owned firms are currently operating throughout Africa with business value reaching up to $2trillion, and $300billion in investment (Shepard, 2019).

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5 TRALAC (Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa). Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

6 UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade and Development). 2013. "The rise of BRICS FDI and Africa." Global Investment Trends Monitor, Special Edition, March 28th.

Cities in Africa are currently undergoing industrialisation that is partly unrecognised by the World, mainly because people are only after the large-scale industrialisation. Simons (2019) describes what he called the 'unsung industrial revolution' going on in Ghana, Uganda, Senegal, and Cote d'Ivoire. This revolution has been described as cottage industrialisation, an alternative to the large-scale industrial complexes that seem to be hard to pull off in Africa. It is powered by a revolution in modular plant design, multi-purpose machinery, efficient small-batch production, global SME-SME engagement, new forex transfer practices, and the growing strategic transformation of China's late-phase industrial players. The Chinese SME sector is becoming more attuned to hunting for global opportunity while providing country-specific expertise, and tailoring solutions for an individual African country with planning, training, and support packages. Thus, knocked-down luxury cars are being reassembled in Ghana, we find innovative clay bricks kilns in Uganda, and innovative milk-vending in Kenya. In Ghana, the industrial sector has grown over the last decade from 25.2 per cent to 33.2 per cent, while World Bank recognised manufacturing as the fastest-growing contributor to growth in Uganda (Simons, 2019).

Scholars suggest that the future of Africa is urban. This means increased, improved and smarter infrastructure including city planning and regulation of land use, high investment rate, reduction of the poverty line, and better ways of managing the challenges of climate change and environmental conditions, adequate and efficient tax management systems and harnessing the dynamism of the informal sector. African cities are beginning to reap the dividends of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The smartphone is connecting all corners of the continent, and data generated from hundreds of millions of devices and cheap computing power can potentially improve urban living. Technological innovations such as solar photovoltaic systems, battery storage, Internet of Things sensors and even satellites are rapidly falling down the cost curve (Muggah & Hill, 2018). To this end, Kenya just became the first sub-Saharan African country to launch a satellite into space (Kipruto & Ngasike, 2018).

These are indications of the economic growth in Africa, which is expected to pick up at 4.1 per cent in 2021 as against the 3.9 per cent in 2019. Growth fundamentals are improving with a gradual shift from private consumption toward investment and reports. For the first time in a decade, investment accounted for more than half of Africa's growth, with private consumption accounting for less than one-third (AFDB, 2020).

Conclusion

This paper highlights the growth and development Africa has been undergoing since the turn of the 21st century, to render the concept of Third World weak in application to African countries. It is the position of the author that many so-called Third World countries have broken loose from this categorisation through political liberalisation and economic independence, and that the concept of Third World is not bound or exclusive to individual continents or regions. However, it applies to various geographical locations in the World, including the First World. Countries who bear Third World characteristics and identity in terms of a high rate of poverty and low economic development can be found in different locations in the World, no matter, their geopolitical location. African countries have become a hub for thriving investment, especially for investors from BRICS countries and an important trade partner due to their market dynamics for growing economies like China.

Africa is equally recognised as the second fastest-growing region, with the promise of increased urbanisation by 2025. This has repositioned Africa in the international system as a favourable trade partner and suggests that Africa is not a dumping ground but rather fertile grounds for emerging economies. Notably, African countries such as Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, and Cote d'Ivoire are making remarkable progress in providing support and finance for SME to promote home-grown goods and increase exportation. Such medium-scale businesses and subtle technology-dominant forces that are at work tend to up the standards of African industrialisation. Even though African economies are weak, the prospect for growth and diversification is encouraging. Thus, it would be derogatory to apply the term Third World to Africa exclusively, while blindly pointing to backwardness, poverty, and economic dependency. This paper believes Africa is turning around.

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RUNNING SLOW ON A FAST LANE: RECALIBRATING AFRICA'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES WITHIN THE GLOBAL CREATIVE ECONOMY

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Abstract

Academic debates on the *pros* and *cons* of globalisation continue to pit scholars on either side of the table. Compelling arguments in favour of the reduction of trade and migration barriers to encourage regional, continental, and trans-continental economic growth have been made. This has recorded moderate success but generated other complexities, especially in the balance of trade and movement between the Global North and Global South. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's critical theory of globalisation as a multi-dimensional process that is not just about financial flows and trade, but also cultural flows and exchange of ideas is profound and resonates well with many 'disadvantaged' countries. This position throws up opportunities for Africa to develop, highlight and promote its creative and cultural industries, and use the premise to challenge dominant discourse and stereotypes about the continent. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report on the contribution of the creative industries across the globe puts Africa's share of the global creative economy at less than 2%. Nigeria's *Nollywood* remarkable growth, even with the absence of strategic infrastructural and negligible governmental support, points to the critical potentialities of Africa's creative and cultural industries. This study is an exploratory interrogation of Africa's creative and cultural industries progress or lack of it, *vis a vis* the African Union Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries, signed by all African cultural ministers in 2008. The study concludes that for Africa to earn a place of respect and identity in the global arena of ideas and aesthetics, and to increase its market share in the world's creative economy. There is a need for more excellent vision and

political will to sell and drive Africa's creative and cultural industries as vectors of development in a fast-changing world.

Key words: Globalisation, Creative and Cultural Industries, Creative Economy

Introduction

All societies have distinct cultures, traditions, belief systems and ways of life that say more about their peoples, including where they come from and their identities, these are strategic components of existence. Over time, these firmly entrenched identities and influences have been preserved, not only for posterity and memory but more importantly, as significant elements of socio-cultural, political, and even economic developments of societies.

Different human societies are marked by unique cultural practices, beliefs, and systems. Anthropologists are interested in culture in its totality while examining their characteristics and relationship to their environments. Thus, culture, as it is usually understood, includes a totality of traits and characters unique to a people to the extent that it marks them different from other peoples or societies. These unique traits include, but are not limited to, their language, dressing, music, work, arts, religion, and dancing amongst others. This argument may even be stretched further to include people's social values, norms, and taboos. A proper definition of values, in this context, may be taken as the concerned societies' beliefs about what is right and wrong and even what is essential in life.

In discussing the subject of Cultural and Creative Industries, it is crucial to lay out what constitutes these industries. According to Dennis (2019), Cultural industries refer to industries that thread together the creation, production, storage (preservation) and commercialisation of creative contents which are intangible and cultural. These contents typically enjoy copyright protection, whether they come as services or goods. Cultural industries generally include but are not limited to crafts, designs, printing, publishing, multimedia, audio, audio-visual, photographic, and cinematographic productions. Creative industries, on the other hand, are an assemblage of a broader range of activities. These activities include the cultural industries, as well as all cultural or artistic productions, whether live or produced as individual units. The creative industries are those in which the product or service includes a substantial element of artistic or creative endeavour and can be stretched to include activities like advertising and architecture (Bilton and Leary 2004; Chuluubaatar *et al*. 2013).

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's Creative Economy Report 2008 defines the creative economy as "the interface between creativity, culture, economics and technology as expressed in the ability to create and circulate intellectual capital, with the potential to generate income, jobs and export earnings while at the same time promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development". The above illustrates what the emerging creative economy has already begun to do. Since the turn of the century, governments increasingly recognised this and begun to put policies in place for the promotion of their creative and cultural economies. The fallout of this is an overturn of the hitherto scant attention paid by researchers, resulting in a growing body of analysis, statistics, and mapping exercises on the connection between culture, creative industries, and economic development. This remapping is done to provide governments with data for policy formulation. Sadly, Africa is not entirely in the flow of the global wave as most governments on the continent remain unconvinced of the potentials that lie therein (De-Miguel-Molina *et al*. 2012).

The Global Picture of Cultural and Creative Industries

Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) are becoming increasingly vital components of modern post-industrial knowledge-based economies, accounting for higher than average growth and job creation, even as they have become significant vehicles of cultural identity – an essential factor in fostering cultural diversity (UNESCO 2006). The global creative economy is made up of cultural and creative industry sectors that generate annual revenues of more than US$2,250 billion as well as global exports of over US$250 billion. The UNESCO Global Report of 2018 says that in the years ahead, these sectors will constitute around 10% of global GDP. At present, the Cultural and Creative Industries provide nearly 30 million jobs globally as they employ more people in the 15–29 age category more than any other sector (Flew and Cunnigham 2010).

Nearly half of the people working in the Cultural and Creative Industries are women, opening new opportunities to address gender inequalities. Influencing income generation, job creation and export earnings, the Cultural and Creative Industries have become significant drivers of economies and trade strategies in developed and developing countries. Digital technologies have dramatically changed the Cultural and Creative Industries. Cooke's (2013) position points to a danger that the public sector will lose its agency on the creative scene if it remains unable to address challenges for the diversity of cultural expressions in the digital environment such as the rise and market concentration of large global online platforms, the unfair remuneration of artists or the monopoly on artificial intelligence (UNESCO Global Report 2018). Despite the enormous potentials and strategic importance

of the Cultural and Creative Industries, there are still growing threats to the industries, and these have continued to slow down the overall and necessary fast-paced development of the sector.

Africa and Its Cultural and Creative Economy

Speaking specifically about Africa, the continent's remarkable cultural diversity holds enormous promise for the practical usage of the mostly unexplored creative potential that can be found in the different countries and cultures within the continent. As the continent with most countries, Africa accounts for nearly 15% of the global population. It is believed that nearly 2000 different ethnic groups form the demographic of the continent and, that close to 3000 languages are spoken across the continent, thus positioning Africa as a rich and varied socio-cultural landscape (Donnell 2015). Aside from this, with nearly 200 million Africans between 15 and 24 (and this, according to the 2012 African Economic Outlook Report, is projected to double by 2045), further contributing to the prospect of innovative and entrepreneurial strategies that will significantly aid the creative and cultural economies of the vast continent.

Research shows that Africa's cultural heritage has remained largely untapped and has thus failed to maximise its multi-level potentials as a development catalyst, primarily serving as an economic boost. Not saying anything of its prospects as a driver of the continent's democratisation processes, and its contributions to building resources for conflict prevention, resolution, and management across the continent. Over the years, Africa's rich cultural heritage including its arts and traditions have received far less than needed attention. State resources allocated to these are often grossly insufficient, as these sectors have often been cast as needless and unnecessary in the scheme of things for the development of modern African society (Castellote 2015; Sankoh 2018). Political leaders on the continent fail to see the strategic resource for peace-building embedded in the age-long traditions and cultures derived from the different societies of the continent (Tagbo 2019).

In looking at the creative and cultural industries in Africa, it is germane to note that most of such activities take place in the informal sector. This presents enormous challenges for the gathering of reliable data. These challenges are prevalent across the continent as countries like South Africa and lately Nigeria, still fall short of having demonstrative data on increasing activities in the creative and cultural economies. These could be due to the roots of the industries, as Africa's and Africans' traditions are rarely seen as anything but a way of life of its different societies (Alakwe 2018). Beyond that, and so, most governments in Africa lack precise and definitive state policies on their Cultural and Creative Industries,

thus affecting the obtaining of reliable data. In general, government policy has yet to dedicate enough efforts to the exploration of culture as a source of income and development.

Nevertheless, the development of the Cultural and Creative Industries on the continent is inevitable, as there is a long overdue, yet slowly but growing investment in cultural and creative enterprises. These recent developments have begun to influence and encourage many governments' attention, thus stimulating a revisiting of policies to increase the harnessing of the cultural capital of the different countries. This development will further energise the African renaissance, and consciousness by expanding the scope of development initiatives beyond economic growth, to encompass dimensions of human development necessary for not only durable prosperity, but for political stability, and the preservation of cultural heritage in Africa (Alakwe 2018).

In a way, the recognition of the importance and significance of Cultural and Creative Industries as an instrument of achieving broader development goals by African countries have begun, albeit gradual. These activities include the holding of different summits, workshops, conferences, (the Entertainment Conference in Nigeria; Ongea! the Eastern Africa Music Summit; Scenario Writing workshop in Algeria; Film Masterclasses in Rwanda), and the integration of the development of the Cultural and Creative Industries and their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. For instance, Ghana has begun with her focus on the development and promotion of the music and film industries, Mali with the ambition to connect culture with religion, social harmony and security, Nigeria by providing a home to its film industry and Senegal with the promotion of local crafts as an essential element in reducing poverty (Daley 2019).

Thus, African countries, with their ethnic diversity, are beginning to perceive culture as a vehicle to express their identities, and are thus initiating processes that lead to possession of a unique sense of aesthetics. Furthermore, they become not only examples for others in terms of the attention they pay to the preservation of their cultural heritage (traditional festivals in Ethiopia, and Angola; UNESCO candidature files of Asmara (Eritrea); 'awareness campaign' in Angola); but also in terms of the rich and diverse initiatives to promote creative talents (Zimbabwe Greatest Talent Show; "Kurema. Kureba, Kwiga" initiative; "Africa in 500 Years" initiative in Malawi).

The creative sector is one of the fastest-growing economic sectors worldwide. According to data of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the annual growth for the period 2000 – 2005 is estimated at 8.7%, constituting some 3.4% of the total world trade in 2005 and the sector employed some 5.6 million people in the European Union alone in 2006. The African part of the sector's world trade is estimated at

1%. This trend has been in evidence since 1980. Between 1980 and 1998, global trade in cultural products (including hardware) quadrupled from $98 billion to USD 388 billion (UNESCO). Around the 1990s, the term - Creative Sector - came into more general use to define this 'cultural economy'. In the decade following, 1998-2008, global trade in cultural products continued its growth, recording USD750 billion in 1998 (UNCTAD).

Notwithstanding the impressive increase of African export of creative goods from $740 million (2002) to $2.2 billion (2008), African creative products still claim a very insignificant part of the global markets representing only 0.36% and 0.54% respectively (UNCTAD 2010:130). These modest results, on the global stage, could be explained by the weaknesses and challenges that Cultural and Creative Industries face in Africa. As noted by Musinguzi (2016), African countries encounter a wide range of obstacles. For example, they lack governmental funding, have limited infrastructure, experience the low priority of Cultural and Creative Industries in national developmental agendas, and do not have enough skilled and professionally trained people. Their copyright laws are not adequately enforced; and fail to provide high-quality products. For instance, only seven countries in Africa have established performance industries, and most of the others have only "embryonic music industries" (UNCTAD 2010: 42).

Despite these dismal figures, it is necessary to point out that the products of Cultural and Creative Industries — movies, dances, paintings, books, music, games — have never been consumed as much as they are consumed today, across the globe. The appreciation of cultural products is not only an original/peculiar vehicle of communication between people of different nationalities, 'the universal language,' but also a vehicle of introducing yourself, of shaping a country's identity, of sharing with others their cultural richness. Given such socio-cultural significance and the aesthetic and symbolic meaning to the products, thus, one of the severe challenges the Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa faces, in the years of globalisation, which promotes a kind of cultural homogenisation, is not only how to meet a technical problem. The East African Community's Culture and Creative Industries Bill introduced in March 2015 is precisely aimed "to create an environment that promotes talents and the necessary infrastructure to develop the industries, and to remove existing barriers, so countries are also exploring how to appropriately preserve their rich traditional culture and represent national identity through contemporary art.

Africa's Creative and Cultural economy Indicators

While the absence of reliable data deflects clarity in economic development approaches, there is indicative 'data' and certainties to draw several critical and accurate assumptions. Though Africa controls a negligible part of the formal market, the sustained global increase in trade in cultural products – based on accurate data and evidence – has, by definition, included Africa. From a perspective of the 'African cultural product,' Africa is quite effectively connected to the global cultural hubs and capitals (Amielo 2018).

In music, it is easy to point with certainty to direct linkages between Francophone African artistes with Paris and Brussels based record and music promotion companies. The largest retail distributor of African music in the world (FNAC) operates from Paris, the capital of France. The same conclusion would be implied and reached in connections between London and most parts of Anglophone Africa; Lisbon (Portugal) and increasingly Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) stand with Lusophone Africa; in the USA, a sizeable New York and USA East Coast linkage with West Africa. South African cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg are regional nodes in this global music production system, just as Dakar (Senegal) serves West Africa and to a less degree, Nairobi can be counted for East Africa. Putumayo Music (world music distributors) maintains a Cape Town office. Sony Music's African interests are based in Johannesburg. Virtually all major African artistes record and even shoot music videos in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Dakar, as well as Paris, Lisbon, and England for the major European record companies; and are distributed globally (Swayne 2019).

There is also the African Diaspora dimension to these linkages. Partly, the linkage between African cultural products and global cultural trade and productions is promoted by African Diaspora connections, and these have continued to proliferate, especially in the past 25 years. Nigeria's Nollywood has continued to enjoy the resources of the Nigerian Diaspora as film productions are often funded with financial and human capital from outside the homeland (Odugbemi 2020). Nearly 12% of the population of Greater London Council is African, with over 85% being first-generation immigrants. Significant Senegalese and Nigerian communities are established in New York and Washington; a sizeable Ghanaian community is established in Illinois (mainly Chicago) and historically in Hamburg, Germany and Denmark, Paris, Marseilles, Lisbon, Southern Italy, and more recently Spain. 300,000 Africans make a home in mainland China. It is common to find sizeable African communities, in many European and American cities of over 250,000 people (Aduah 2019). About 6-8 million Africans live in South Africa (Swayne 2019)

Although a sizeable (with no precise figure) proportion of the 'value-added' in the chain of cultural production — published books, films, recorded music and CDs, and fine arts — is generated outside the African continent where more prosperous and predictable markets exist. A good number of African authors have a significantly higher readership in Europe, sometimes in a foreign language than in their country of origin, yet, the production and consumption of African cultural products are on the increase within Africa, and assumed that 'structurally' it is re-locating to Africa. The evidence for this is indicative but clear even with the involvement of South Africa based cable television company, Multichoice, and its broad cross-regional media contents. When it comes to films, an overwhelming percentage (perhaps 95%) of Nigerian straight-to-DVD film product is sold in African markets. Nigeria is the largest producer of low-budget DVD films and the second-largest film industry in the world. Nollywood releases an average 45-55 new titles a week; with an average 50,000 units sold per film; with sales of 130 million units, and wholesale turnover estimated at nearly $350m per annum (NEXIM Bank 2019).

Historically, publishers in France and the United Kingdom have continually provided a large proportion of books for sub-Saharan African markets (except primary school level, and more industrialised South Africa). Figures of book exports from the EU to Africa are regular and reliable. In the 1980s and 90s, driven by World Bank loans and bilateral grants to African countries, these exports proliferated to peak at about $800 million per annum in 1998, as a clear indication of the scale of African book consumption. After this period, the rate of growth of EU book exports to Africa slowed considerably (estimated $950m in 2005) while African book markets and consumption (including World Bank loans) have expanded at around 5% annually. Although there has been a considerable increase in Indian exports to Africa (being the only other sizeable book exporter to Africa), it fails, in Castellote's (2015) opinion "to explain the shortfall" (Borg 2018). There is only one conclusion: a significant volume (approximately USD300m per annum) of book production for African markets has 'shifted' from Europe into Africa. This agrees with the increase in the number and scale of African publishers, from less than 200 in 1980 to over 1000 today (African Publishers Network 2019).

The shift from analogue to digital technology from the mid-1990s revolutionised music production. The investment required to purchase recording equipment fell by two-thirds in the low-budget range. Recording costs plummeted just as costs of skills, training, repair, and maintenance dropped. More importantly, as production shifted to Compact Discs (CDs) from the 90s, CDs remain the mainstay of the African recorded music industry, since internet access and speeds, and absence of online payment systems inhibit the mass adoption of legal streaming and downloading. This, added to the vast and unmitigated

pirating of music in Africa (estimated minimum of 70% of production) can mean only a massive increase in the music CD production and volumes of units sold. There are no figures, but facts are undeniable (Bilton and Leary 2004). A visit to any African market in Lagos, Accra, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, or Kinshasa can be astonishing as virtually any recorded song by any African artiste can be purchased from hundreds of CD vendors. The focus of this paper is not the ethical, legal, and copyright issues, but indicative data relating to the volume and growth in the creative economy.

In 2005, the Stromme Foundation revealed that around 4% of Mali's gross domestic product was derived from music (mainly exports) and 95% was not accounted for. A recent study of Swaziland's Bushfire Music Festival showed that Return on Investment of One million Rand put the festival which is both commercial interests and grants, at Twenty million Rand in turnover. Upcoming and small music industries like Zimbabwe, Mozambique or Lesotho currently create a livelihood for about 5,000-plus individuals.

Considering that arts festivals sit at the 'apex' of any Creative Economy, from an economic perspective as a showcase and marketing catalyst, the rise of African arts festivals has been arguably the clearest indicator of the emergence of an African 'Creative Economy.' Moreover, arts festivals are quite sophisticated instruments in a Creative Economy, logistically demanding, they require finance and investment, high levels of skill, and this must be 'driven' by an internal economy (availability of all the necessary technical, skills, marketing, management linkages, as well as the cultural 'product' and most importantly, the audience). African contemporary performing arts festivals began to emerge from the mid-late 1990s systematically, and today many of the established festivals are about two decades old. Some prominent festivals include Malawi (Blantyre Arts Festival, Lake of Stars 18,000), Zimbabwe (HIFA, 61,000), Egypt (Cairo Jazz Festival 20,000), Mali (Festival au Desert 12,000), Gabon (Gabon hip-hop 35,000), Senegal (Banlieure Rhythm Festival 15,000 and Dakar Jazz Festival 7, 000), Nigeria (Felabration 17,000), Swaziland (Bushfire 21,000) South Africa (National Arts Festival 80,000, Macufe 180,000, Poetry Africa 12,000, Arts Alive 70,000, Cape Town Jazz Festival 65,000), Uganda (Bayimba 10,000), Burkina Faso (Ouaga-Jazz), Nairobi (SawaSawa 20,000-plus), Mozambique (Tunduro 15,000, Maputo Jazz), Zanzibar (Sauti za Busara 25,000) (BBC 2019).

There has been an equivalent festival development in film (Durban International Film Festival, Ouagadougou FESPACO (Africa's most significant film fest 40,000 attendance), and many national festivals. There is also a marked increase in books production (about 15 prominent countries have national/regional book fairs, e.g. Nairobi International Book Fair, 20,000; Cape Town 40,000; Harare 15,000), and to a lesser extent fine art, which is more

scattered. Although several performing arts festivals have already collapsed or gone on the decline, one pattern is evident: there is a significant, verifiable, and credible emergence of performing arts, books, film, and fine arts expositions throughout Africa. From humble starts, the majority are growing steadily in audience standard and scope. There are also massive traditional cultural festivals attracting hundreds of thousands of people in attendance.

African Creative Economy — Realities

At the bottom of the African 'Creative Economy' structure is an overwhelming majority of economic formations and actors that are small (sometimes made up of less than ten persons). According to Koromah (2016). These set of emerging enterprises are mostly not formally registered as companies. From a legal standpoint, these 'arts practitioners' can, at best, be described as self-employed and partnerships. Most times, these individuals frequently 'cross-subsidise' their arts activities with other sources of income. They have a little interchange with the formal sector economy, and only a fluid relationship with the state systems (depending on any use-value to them in this relationship, or any regulatory mechanisms).

In this category exists well over 90% of bands and musical acts, sound and recording studios, a similar percentage of informal art and craft galleries, most filmmakers, theatre groups, dance ensembles, virtually all poets (a massively growing art form in Africa) and niche areas like stand-up comedy, a vast number of self-published authors and perhaps half of all small-medium publishers, as well as most of the service and technology sector that provides sound, staging, technical, repair, logistic, costume, design, promotion, web technology, and transport services among others (Grossman 2018). There are a considerable number of individual operators in the sector, making their livelihood – technically speaking – as 'consultants', and offering a vast range and scope of creative and technical skills, although they would not describe themselves like this.

While this part of the African creative economy looks (and is in a structural sense) chaotic, unregulated, and disorganised (in the sense of any form of association), it is useful and productive, flexible and (in respective arts disciplines, often highly skilled, although mostly self-taught). It exhibits a high degree of entrepreneurial and financial acumen, although essential management and accounting functions are weak (Donnel 2015; Daley 2019). While there is zero access to loan capital (except private loans), capital is generated, overall, through smart business deals, product knowledge and energetic marketing. There is a powerful entrepreneurial spirit at work – survival in challenging local circumstances depends solely on this.

Outside this loop exists the top tier of formal, regulated structures – Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), registered businesses, trade associations, cooperatives, partnerships, and individuals. Outside South Africa, these set of operators and actors account for between 5-10% of production and turnover volumes in the creative economy (depending on sub-sector, books and publishing being about 50%, CD and DVD production about 30%), but it is in a 'strategic' position in terms of relationships with the state (as registered vendors, service providers etc.), and with external funding and funders.

Here one will find music recording companies, some but not all international touring musicians, music schools, arts festivals and prominent concert organisers, significant galleries, bookshops, medium scale publishers, theatres (i.e. physical theatres), ballet and dance schools, performing arts venues, clubs, importers and exporters of hardware, as well as some of the better organised associations (musicians unions, writers bodies and so forth). In this top-tier, there is a degree of dependence on external development funding and generally exchange, inter-action (sometimes ownership) with overseas contacts, suppliers, and customers. Most academic and other policy-related papers view African arts and culture almost entirely through the prism of this small upper-end of the sector (Swayne 2019). It is virtually impossible to make a generic or sweeping submission about how the African creative economy practically functions mainly when it comes to turnover, finance, trade, and investment, since it differs from region to region and between disciplines and sub-sectors, save to make some general comments.

Outside of South Africa, the music industry is still financially fuelled by live music and touring, its turnover generated mostly through audiences, and in close, frenetic partnership with thousands of clubs, bars, and venues. CD sales comprise less than 50% of the typical income, but this is growing. It is, by and large, an entirely 'local economy.' In film, a considerable number of low-budget short films are made in Africa. In Nigeria, this is serious business, with significant private local investment. There is increasing external funding coming into the sector, especially with its soaring popularity as the second largest film industry after Hollywood and Bollywood. Elsewhere, this is mostly driven by small-scale external funding, some investment by local TV stations, and otherwise self-financed. Only South Africa has a medium-large formal film industry (Adesanya 2020).

Arts festivals are mainly dependent on small-medium grants from embassies and European cultural agencies (usually to pay for artists fees and travel), external funders (staging and sound), and increasingly the local corporate sector (branding, marketing). The festivals are starting to generate significant volumes of turnover through the gate and food and beverage sales, and becoming aware that they are close to viability in this respect.

Fine arts and galleries thrive well based on intentional sales to tourists and visitors, and some significant inflows towards the important exhibitions. Publishing is financially driven by the education sector which frequently cross-subsidises more risky areas of fiction and social sciences (i.e. within a single publishing house). Where this is absent, it is funded by a variety of academic sources, and often in co-publishing agreements with overseas publishers. Theatre and dance are almost entirely externally funded, since – unlike music- they cannot generate enough turnover from audiences.

Cutting across all disciplines are tens of thousands of small, direct social 'connections' into Europe, USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, Brazil and elsewhere, bringing all manner of opportunities for sales, touring, help, loans, gifts, exposure, marketing; either through Diaspora connections or foreign friends and well-wishers. Africans are exceptionally gifted at social networking in this way. Throughout this Creative Economy, whether formal in the top-tier, or informal in the vast swathe of entrepreneurship, there is insignificant access to loan and investment capital, (except for small, private investments). Again, South Africa presents a partial exception, and some specific sub-sectors in specific locations (Nigeria, film; Kenya, books, etc.). From an economic angle, external development funding is 'treated' as if, and takes the place of investment capital, although invariably 'pitched' around development rationale.

In concluding, it is evident everywhere, how resilient the creative economy has been in Africa. Not only has it grown with insignificant capital inflows, but it has maintained employment, livelihoods, and incomes, more robustly than much of the formal economy. This is not at all unusual – it reflects, generally, global growth referred to earlier. In the bigger scheme of things, there is undoubtedly substantial headway in the right direction. Africans are increasingly aware that there always has been and will be a global demand for African creativity, especially in textiles, art, crafts, and music. They are now starting to question why other nations in the developed and developing worlds should continue to economically benefit from their creative output when it can be channelled towards strengthening Africa's regional creative license that will, in turn, create new trade patterns between African and global markets.

There is pride in being African and sharing African creativity with the world. The Diaspora is increasingly playing a more significant role in mobilising knowledge and capital in Africa. We need to see a stronger push in elevating the media and advertising skillset in Africa because the continent is poised to become the next big consumer market as the middle-class segment continues to grow and it is expected that this sector will take off in a big way very soon. At the same time, it is essential to ensure that the Cultural and Creative

Industries protect and project African authenticity and ingenuity rather than emulate global ideas for the sake of being in trend with ideas and thoughts from other developed regions.

Africa's cultural and creative revolution is only a matter of time, a reality that can be met very shortly, but it takes creative vision as well as intellectual and financial capital from both the private and public sector to nurture these industries from ground-up. They often cannot deliver a quick return on investment. However, in the long-term they offer socio-economic growth, an abundant supply chain and cultural transformation; and these are industries that will outlive the riches generated from the finite natural resources that have for too long been at the centre of economic policy and economic growth in Africa.

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FROM PHYSICAL TO VIRTUAL SPACE: SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ALTERNATIVE PLACE FOR SOLUTIONS TO HUMAN CHALLENGES

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Abstract

The proliferation of social media in the 21st century has not only offered varied interactions with its users, but has been deployed for a variety of functions. These interactions leave lasting influences with the user. Reactions trail the contents of this kind of communication, as it cuts across different facets of life. In Nigeria, social media has assumed an indispensable category that suffices for physical contact. Against this backdrop, this study adopts netnography for data collection, examination, and analysis to study two different groups on Facebook — *Female IN* (FIN), and *Do-it-Yourself* (DIY) *Alternative Therapy Global*. The study shows that some members of the groups appropriate their aims to their advantage because of events. While *Female IN* is a platform for social issues and personal experiences, spanning marital, official, relationships, and medical issues among others, *Do It Yourself* is for the sharing of information on natural and alternative medication, usually suggested by members who have knowledge and experience, based on the inquiry posed. Although *Female IN* restricts membership to women, *Do It Yourself* is open to all genders. For both groups, the study observes their main aim to be sharing in the quandaries and celebrations of members, while offering a possible solution to assuage their challenges. This paper concludes that as people continue to get desired solution and solace by being members of groups on social media platforms, medical consultations and counselling will transcend physical contacts into virtual spaces, thereby rendering physical consultations increasingly irrelevant.

Key words: Social Media, Physical Contact, Facebook, Virtual Space, Comments

Introduction

> Five months back, I made a post on how I lost my beloved husband while I was still seven months pregnant. I want to say a big thanks to aunty Lola and all the members of this great group for your words of encouragement. I read all your comments, received all the FIN Hugs, love and gifts. On 1 December 2019, the Lord bless me (sic) with a beautiful baby girl … my FIN family thank you thank you and thank you. I love you all. (Comfort Kumashe *FIN*, Accessed 12 February; 2020).

The above is a post from a member of *Female IN* (FIN) a group on Facebook. From the post, it is obvious that this member has leveraged upon the emotional resources, and support from other members to begin coping with a new and tragic phase in her life. The post opens the discussion of this article to a rare advantage of social media in the new age. This advantage underscores an increase in the sourcing for medical and psychotherapeutic consultations on social media. The new attitude implies a shift away from traditional modes of consultation, the clinic and the therapist's office. This article views these consultations as transitional, to call attention to the changing mode or medium of seeking help, counselling, and mentoring from the traditional one-on-one consultations to virtual spaces of the internet. As such, the shifting lines of physical consultations are demystified by social media, and the tangibility of face-face consultations is subsequently reduced into a semi-abstract or electronic realm, as social media posts, and direct messages suffice. As Kent (2015) has said, the rise and popularity of social media since the turn of the mid-2000s is connected to the overwhelming possibilities it commands and its enabling characteristics of information sharing.

Social media platforms are emerging as agents of modern forms of alternative consultations in the 21st century, because as Steenkamp and Hyde-Clark (2014) opine, it is an environment where users participate by sharing information. Such participation opens opportunities for interaction, because many of the individuals in these e-communities are goal-oriented by their peculiarities (Kietzman et al. 2011). While some members of the group may be inactive within the group, others see to its vibrancy by ensuring reciprocity between the encoder and decoder, thus giving credence to LaRose et al. (2014).

What is fundamental to the nature of beneficial relationships within these groups is the sharing of knowledge, and this affirms the position of Schlagwein and Prasarnphanich (2014) that social media emerges for private use. This opinion is no different from Kruse et al. (2018) that social media is increasingly part of the lives of people. By extension, story-telling is capturing the complexities and eccentricities of these lives. Accordingly, there is a sense in which the term 'private use' transforms information gathered into useable bits for

personal improvement, development, or gains, because as Ariel and Avidar (2015) suggested, information is processed and meanings are realised. Invariably, the meanings harvested from the virtual space are carried onward to physical uses. These engagements allow us to understand the new paradigms of social media. With many pieces of evidence confirming the prominent influence of social media on different aspects of human endeavours, we are called to know that social media, with specific emphasis on Facebook, cannot be reduced to a mere facilitator of communication channels. Nevertheless, it instead presents a broad mix of professional, *Do-It-Yourself* (DIY), marginal, amateur, and self-help representation and voices (Kent 2015).

Thus, social media uses are for a plethora of events, as increasing engagements with social media platforms has expanded its usage and functions for the accumulation of human and intellectual capacities (Dell'Anno et al. 2016, Zhang and Lin 2015). Considering its vast and handy characteristics; that instant information, questions, and responses, consultations, suggestions, are gotten within split seconds, the number of users on Facebook has tremendously increased by over one billion in the past decade (Kent 2015). From hospitality to marketing, economy, journalism, medicine, education/learning, information input and output, politics and governance, gender and sexuality, and religious activities, all these interactions take place on social media. The enormous activities that take place on social media are consumed by users of different class, status, gender, age and profession with varying circumstances, goals, ideologies, experiences, and aims. Based on these variables, social media content attracts diverse people to form a community guided by rules not only formed by the different platforms but also by the distinct characteristics of the various groups. These rules ensure that all members of groups are protected, secured, cared for and loved against social vices, human denigrations, and member's assaults. Invariably, social media has become a hub for all social activities, which has subsequently produced nuances of social norms that are negotiated and appropriated by its users (Djerf-Pierre et al. 2016).

The overwhelming influence of social media puts it at the heart of a plethora of circumstances, most importantly, learning. Social media has become a medium for the input and output of knowledge. This same position was corroborated by Deshpande et al. (2019) as they drew attention to how patients of hyperacusis leverage on the indispensable and evolving engagements of social media to learn about their condition, to seek guidance, and support about their health condition.

Kruse et al. (2018) emphasise the abusive nature of people on Facebook's comment sections as they engage in political issues. In their explanation, they opined that politics is a volatile topic and people are edgy because opinions and ideologies differ. Thus, different

ideologies and expectations further create bifurcations that bring like-minded people to pitch arguments against contrasting ones. However, as people argue, social media creates an environment of disrespectful discourse, fights, lack of decorum, and insulting language. However, the contrast is the case with this article. This work contends that the essence, goals, and aims of the groups on Facebook determines the kind of people that form members of the group, the issues that will be engaged and the discussions that will ensue. These groups, although they are closed communities, regulate the behaviours of members.

So far, there is a dearth of literature on the diminishing returns on physical consultation following the seemingly increasing adequacies of social media. By adopting Habermas' (1989; 1991) position of the public sphere that incorporates people from diverse nations and nationalities to participate in different issues that affect human lives, the data harvested from virtual public space for this study reflects the characteristics of public space. This study aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion on social media with a focus on the drift from physical to virtual consultations to the challenges encountered by people, a position informed by the observation of different posts in two different groups on Facebook platform.

FIN: A Brief Overview

As Fraser (1990) argues the original theory of the public sphere by Habermas, which excludes women and minors, promotes female marginalisation. Groups, associations, and societies under the broad umbrella of feminism have risen, lending supporting voices, courageously speaking against such injustice, and for equal societal inclusion. One of such groups is FIN, a Facebook group which was initiated by Lola Omolola on 12 September 2015 and has a membership of 1.5million people with 4.9k new members in the 3rd week of Feb.; 2020. Located in Chicago, members span different geographical locations in the world. The group which was formerly named *Female in Nigeria* (FIN) at inception, had its name changed to *Female IN* (FIN) - exclusively for women.

As the name implies, the group aims to discuss any social issue involving women with a primary focus on protecting, counselling, and challenging the dominant narrative of female subjugation and advancing the right of the female gender in the society. This group's mission to advance the course of women positively and counter the stereotyping of the female gender has many other functions that encourage members to clasp onto the resources to satisfy their emotional, social, psychological, physical needs. Although it started as F*emale in Nigeria*, its metamorphosis into *Female IN* has expanded its scope to cover the broad spectrum of women across the globe. FIN's focus tilts towards the social, and marital wellness of the members. The women-only community teaches contemporary

women to be expressive and confront their fears, discrimination, intimidation, timidity, and deprivation; hence it does not accept anonymity.

Controversy trails FIN group because accusations have dogged the group that its breeds aggressive women who have developed challenging attitudes towards their spouses and has in turn given rise to a series of domestic violence and broken relationships. The group seemingly is an advocate for feminism and as the police PRO of Lagos State alleged that domestic violence is on the rise ever since feminist advocacy against female repression has received more excellent representation (Eshalomi, African Notes, forthcoming). Here is not to set the tone for the support of female marginalisation because of all the domestic violence prevalent in the country in the last few years, none of the offenders has confessed to having mustard the drive from FIN. While these allegations against the group have not been critically proven, they cannot be taken for facts. Nonetheless, the encouraging and supportive comments in the comment section of some posts on the FIN group may be a breeding ground for raising a reoriented generation of women who are daily challenging the age-long cultural ideology of the marginalised female gender.

DIY: A Brief Overview

Created by Olubukola Oyenike Akeju on 24 September 2017, the group has 950,000 members to its credit with 2,200 members who joined in the third week of February 2020. Started as DIY Herbs, the group has changed its name four times with the current name as *DO IT YOURSELF (DIY) ALTERNATIVE THERAPY GLOBAL*. Its scope spans infertility, childcare, general wellness, infection, hormonal imbalance, sex/libido enhancement, and prayer. The inclusion of 'global' to its current name is to broaden its horizon for global inclusion and participation. Unlike FIN, many members of DIY pose as anonymous. They request that their identity should be concealed and that they should be notified as soon as their request is uploaded, so they can follow up in the comment section, and engage with commenters. This is because many of the posts are infertility related, or contain information about other sensitive or delicate health conditions.

In the language of the group, having fertility issues which are sometimes referred to as 'trying to Conceive (TTC), has been modified as 'going to conceive' *(GTC)*, and this is instructive to connote some level of assurance which the term 'trying to conceive' may not offer. It also denotes affirmation and optimism. Often the idea of anonymity is used in the group to avoid the societal stigmatisation that comes with being childless, to protect the identities, and dignity of members. Many times, the feeling of shame and stigmatisation informs what pushes people away from consulting allopathic medicine. These same people, then come to this Facebook group, under the guise of anonymity to express their

predicaments. When Rüggemeier (2019) said shame drives people into confinement, they probably had some of these indirect enquirers in mind. Based on popular demand, different medical issues are picked weekly and treated to enlighten people and raise their consciousness to the implications therein. Often the administrators of the group stand in the gap for the enquirer while he/she waits in the comment section to read the suggestions and opinions from 'knowledgeable' members.

Both groups are about the holistic wellness of members. While the group FIN focuses on the social well-being of women, DIY is preoccupied with the medical well-being of her members. For both groups, administrators design and define the content of the group, which promote the ideals of the group. They create boundaries and define what is prohibited so that members do not abuse privileges or hurt other members (Opgenhaffen and d'Haenens 2015, VRT 2014). The purpose is to ensure that all members are protected against unscrupulous elements, and failure to adhere to these laid down rules attracts punishments and sometimes removal from the group. For both groups members' posts are first sent to the administrator for approval before They are uploaded on the group's page for the general audience. Finally, the evolution that has greeted name change for these groups cannot be divorced from the ambition to reach out to a broader audience, gain more global relevance and spread the message of general wellness to the world's populace.

Methodology

This paper uses conversation analysis. The study draws from random existing Facebook posts from two identified groups. The priority of Facebook is connected to the convenience and features that allow favourable conditions for public domain discourses Kruse et al. (2018). Such an assertion leverages on many users in comparison to other social media platforms (Fuchs 2012, Kent 2015). Apart from the ease of response from other dedicated members, exploring social media is flexible. These features explain the reason members are quick to drop on-the-spot experiences/emergencies with the assurance that suggestions, opinions, ideas, counsels, recommendations, warnings will provide the enquirer with adequate information that will inform their decision afterwards. The posts were used to discuss the gradual shift from physical to virtual space for consultation following information sharing.

Two groups were identified for this purpose: FIN and DIY. While FIN is an exclusive group for women, DIY is both gender-inclusive. The choice of a female-only group is not a mistake but for reasons that the researcher is a female and identifies as one but makes it up by choosing another group that is gender inclusive. After careful appraisal of the posts over two months, posts that underscore the central theme of this study were selected. As said

earlier, posts were selected randomly but with a conscious focus on the theme. These posts are then thematised for further analysis. The identities of commenters are not concealed within the article because they are on the internet and thus, makes them accessible. Where posters were anonymous, a group administrator stood in their stead, but such anonymous posts remain in this article.

Data Thematisation and Analysis

Knowledge ProvidersAs part of the mandate of the groups under study, administrators provide lectures on simple home health practices, safety tips, and first-aid therapy to members on the groups, hence giving credibility to Kind and Evans (2015) position that constant learning takes place on social media. There is no strict rule cast that the admin must make such post. So, members who are knowledgeable in any human related issue are encouraged to share their post with the administrator first. if such posts meet the criteria as laid by the administrator, they will be posted to the group's page for a larger audience. Below is the post of a member who shared an alternative knowledge on the natural/herbal therapy to a child who is yet walk in between 9months-2years

> Get the root of a male papaya tree, pound it very well, add any soap of your choice. Use it for bathing the child from the knee to toes. Even if something is behind it, that child will walk in 7days. Try it and thank me later. (Blessing Benedict DIY, Accessed, 12 February 2020).

In the comment section, Amaka Rejoice Oguike acknowledged the potency of the herbal mixture and attested to having tried it. With corroboratory comments, these groups hold the potential to influence the understanding of people about the efficacy of alternative therapy. While further details may not be included in the body of the lecture, advanced engagements and discussions are done in the comment section. Individuals ask peculiar or personal questions, based on their experiences or the experiences of others, such as the number of times to use the alternative medication, specific time of use, and length or duration of use. These questions help inform their position on the therapy given, whether to use or discard. While Deshpande et al (2019) have argued that Facebook was the popular platform for service providers, the situation is no different from these knowledge providers who can be considered to fall in that category but subtitled as volunteers. Because Kind and Evans (2015) believe that learning is a continuous process in the human life, and one that is a social activity accelerated by social media, DIY takes it as a point of duty to teach members new, but sometimes, popularly demanded topics. Furthermore, these groups return to old posts, either because of a specific request or while emphasising an issue, using these old

posts as a reminder and more importantly as a learning tool, especially when new members make enquiries.

Knowledge Seekers

Direct enquirers are members who do not conceal their identity, they ask questions about a health-related issues, and in most cases need urgent attention. For these commenters, their identity is usually not hidden, and the health condition that they ask about is usually not one that will attract social stigma. Under such an inquiry, suggestions are provided by members who know about what should be done in such situations. The posts below are examples of direct enquirers, respectively:

> What is the fastest way to binging sugar level down? A sister stepped on a nail some weeks ago; she has been treating it but to no improvement. She went to the hospital on Monday as she could no longer bear the pain. It was discovered that her sugar level is high. She has been on medication since Monday, but the sugar level is rising. Nothing can be done on the leg if the sugar does not drop. It was 250 as of this morning (Ifypretty Tony Onukwuli, DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020)

> Good morning DIY family, my baby is suffering from this skin problem on his neck (picture showing a burnt-like colouration and rash). I have taken him to the hospital and even apply (sic) herbs yet no improvement rather it itches him much keeping him restless. Please help a sister with any home remedy, and I will be much grateful (Ada Moses DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020)

> Please, I need your help, my family, please I have this strong pile what can I use to cure it permanently? (Jane DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020)

Traditional medical suggestions were offered by fellow members who know the inquiry. Of the 13 responses that were available at the time of data collection, only one member with experience suggested allopathic consultation for a chronic pile condition. From looking at the three posts in this section, we see there is a construction of family which is not biological but social, and that says something about an emerging concept of a 'virtual family'. More importantly, as people continue to construct social media groups as family, it will repose their confidence level in the assistance and support, especially when/as they get the required solution of their challenges.

The tone of the first post is saddled with urgency. Because social media provides on-the-go information which is facilitated and hastened by speciality groups and individuals, immediate response to questions comes in handy. By becoming members of a group, people

are socialised into understanding the urgency that comes with enquiries on their platform, and they become incentivised to reply to these enquiries promptly. The information detailing that hospital consultation has been sought not only accelerated the suggestions that flooded the comment section but reminds us of a slash down the middle of the confidence in the efficacy of allopathic therapy. These posters recognise the impressive intellectual capital and commitment of active participants to which other beneficiaries have testified and has deferred to the same for private use.

Health Tips/Challenge

Health tips and challenges are essential strategies that people often imbibe to maintain a healthy living. For optimum results, practices are adhered to and observed like daily rituals. These practices are nuanced and come in different shades ranging from a food culture, daily workouts and exercises, time management for different activities that affect the body's outward and inward look, rest and sleep culture, and drink practices. As a group that also has a mandate to prevent rather than cure, the DIY group embarks on giving health tips and admonishing members to participate in a good challenge. Below is a post by the founder of the group:

> How many of us are faithful with this our February tommy blast challenge with ginger, garlic, cucumber, and aloe vera… Note: not suitable for pregnant women, nursing mothers of children below six months old and ulcer patients (Akeju DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020)

The need for this interrogation cannot be overemphasised because some people are more likely to discontinue health tips/challenge midway before they begin to experience any meaningful change. For instance, most people, especially women, visit the gym to cut down belly fat, but the rigours that bring the desired result demand optimum discipline and commitment. Knowing that many people drop out, explains why the poster who is incidentally the founder of the group poses it as a question. The post also comes with a caveat for specific people, and that explains that the group is not ignorant of the health implications of different methods, therapy, and herbal mixtures for some relatively constrained people like children, sick or as mentioned in the post.

Solution Acknowledgers/Testimony

The trio posts below hit the crux of this article basically because they are a confirmation of the claims of this study that there is a gradual drift from physical consultations to virtual space. Kimme Hea (2014) informs us that it is not limited to digital interfaces or the data on the server. However, this study expands the scope of social media with emphasis on

Facebook as a significant change by inducing and facilitating consultations among virtual humans.

> Good morning mum Akeju, admins and great DIY family. For now, please conceal my identity. I will reveal my identity when my testimony is complete. The journey of TTC has been hell to the extent I attempted suicide in 2017…did surgery for ovarian cyst, surgery to open right tube failed and took herbs to shrink fibroid… Moreover, IUI, IVF failed. A good friend introduced me to this group last year in September, and I took combo, avocado seed and, the banana recipe as prescribed on the group. This month of November, I tested positive for pregnancy and in January 2020, the scan has shown that I am pregnant with twins. God who made it possible will help me carry this gift till full-term and deliver safely. (Anonymous DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020).

> Happy new month friends. I am thanking God for this group and you all for the remedies. I try the pineapple leaf for waist pain, and it works like magic. Thank you so much. This pain has been with me for a year now. I woke up this morning feeling as if I have never felt any pain before. (Lizzy Fibika DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020).

> Good morning house… you guys are the real MVPs, and I am so grateful for all your responses. I took garlic, honey, hot water, palm oil as recommended and I can boldly tell you that my cough has gone. I slept peacefully, and I feel a lot better. (Ayansina Oluwatoyin Oluokun DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020).

The narratives above show how social media has created an expanse territory in the medical landscape of people's lives. For all three narratives, we are invited to appreciate the tremendous advantage and promises which the DIY group holds. The first and the last posts refer to the group as a family, and that is instructive for us to know that family is not only a function of blood, but one of mental formation and emotional acceptance as said earlier. The second poster sees the group members as friends and one that is reliable to such an extent that their resourcefulness calls for the veneration of God. It will not be out of place to assume that all three posters have consulted western doctors before consulting and applying the DIY suggestions.

While it is made clear in the first post that medical consultations have been previously made, the other two posters are subtly implied. The reason is not far-fetched in the sense that the second poster informs us that the pain had been with her for a year and the last poster has not been able to have a sound sleep since the inception of the cough until she got on the group. There is a high tendency that both posters would have consulted medical doctors before seeking help from alternative therapy. Again, we are reminded now that this

article is not to set the tone that allopathic medicine is inadequate, but to raise our consciousness to the flocking of people to the adequacies of social media and virtual space consultations in an unprecedented manner.

Building a Community of Sisterhood

The post by Eyo below reflects an emerging culture of woman-woman support. In her article on women's places beyond the domestic (Eshalomi forthcoming) tells of the contrasting positions of women for and against Aisha Buhari in the heat of the statement her husband made about the domestication of women. Engaging such binary is crucial to the now evolving female gender culture pervading the social media, especially the exclusive FIN group. In the spirit of developing sisterhood and giving the female a voice to speak against women's marginalisation, women support fellow women, and periodical warnings and rules of engagements are posted to reiterate the dos and the don'ts of the group. Hear Eyo:

> I am so happy I stood up for my fellow woman today… some guys have dragged the bag of a young lady and put it on the bus. All efforts to stop them proved abortive. Instead, one of them assaulted her by hitting her butt. I was angry at such audacity and quickly crossed to meet her. I shouted at her to bring down her bag since they refused to bring it down. I assisted her in carrying the other bag, and we crossed to the other side of the road. I helped her board another bus that will take her to another car park, and I paid the fare, despite not knowing her. (Eyo Florence Nnanke FIN Accessed 12 February 2020).

The comment sections were flooded with prayers for Eyo, for having the courage to help a stranger and a woman in an area dominated by thugs and tout in Lagos, Nigeria. Other peculiar comments make bold the place of sisterhood and how the group has fostered and helped women develop a feeling of helping fellow women when challenged. Phrases like FIN spirit, FIN boldness, FIN hug tell us that FIN has provided a platform that is grooming women to command the type of respect that redefines the female gender in a positive light. This participant was proud of what she has done and appreciated the fact that she developed such courage by her membership on FIN. One tradition that is inherent in the comments of the members is that the interest of the FIN member comes FIRST, and that shapes the way members run their comments.

Comfort Seekers

When Nagle and Pope (2013) say, the engagements and interaction of members with social media pages create value and relevance they probably had Shakiro and Abigail in mind. The value that people derive from interacting with identified groups on social media drives them into exploring the potentials therein.

> I am tired of how the society I found myself in expects a married woman to change who she is because of marriage. I scream because I do not get why she should become someone else to make her supposed 'new family' like her… I have many things to scream about, but I stop here because of my heartaches. I scream here because this is the only place, I can scream without being criticised, judged, and condemned. The only place I can be heard and the only place I can scream without losing my voice. (Ibrahim Shakiro FIN, Accessed 12 February 2020).

Shakiro's displeasure is connected to the dominant female repression that subdues the woman to live for the happiness of her husband (Eshalomi forthcoming). From the tone of her post, we can quickly tell of her frustrations of conforming to societal expectations of the female gender, especially when such is married. Her roles and behaviour are regularised to conform to societal ideals. More importantly, this post is the fact that the poster subtly calls our attention to a more conducive environment where she can express herself and receive the much-desired comfort she seeks. Under the comment section, some members who are experiencing similar challenges share their story and possible coping strategies which are informing of the poster to know that she is not alone in the said ordeal. With such understanding and acceptance as well as an assurance the group promises, members, explore the emotional and psychological resources for their gains, thereby showing little or no need for a one-on-one therapist, counsellor, or adviser. Such assurance often helps in the healing process and a possible crash of the feeling of depression.

Another related post by Abigail below reveals the plethora of posts that come on the FIN page:

> I got into a relationship after my boyfriend broke up with me…we were near opposite with many differences, but I have not stopped supporting him through the good and the bad times… recently, I have been going through a lot of family, school and financial challenges, and it is telling on my relationship with everyone, including him… right now I am beginning to think I am my problem. Maybe I should have been stronger and not let my problems tell on me; maybe I am not worthy of love, … I need some courage right now because I am broken (Abigail Otevwetiroro FIN, Accessed 12 February 2020).

In the post above, Abigail's resolution to seek courage on the FIN platform is not divorced from the knowledge informed by her interaction with the group over time that members of the group provide emotional and psychological support through their suggestions, opinions, and advice. From her post, we can understand that her relationships are experiencing downtime and people around her are not fit for assuaging her from her present condition. Seeking the help of a psychologist or counsellor will be cost implicative. However, the Facebook FIN platform is a not-for-profit group that provides an opportunity to get more at no expense made. Further details about her situation, make the tone of depression uncomfortably loud to the extent that she sees herself as the problem which is leading into withdrawal from people around her. As craved by this poster, members of the group did not hesitate to dish out words of encouragement in their numbers and advice that can help her better manage the situation.

Indirect enquirers

Indirect inquiry usually takes the form of anonymity, when this is the case, any of the admin members post the request under their identity to the group's wall. The original poster often notifies her presence and follow-up in the comment section. While some of them engage further, others, just read and extract the suggestion suitable for them to maintain their anonymity. Nevertheless, some others send messages to the inbox of members who they think have raised suitable suggestions worth giving a shot.

> Kindly post and notify me when posted.

> What is the herbal solution for erectile dysfunction and lack of morning wood? Most DIY tips used, including tiger nut milk and combo are just quick fix, hospital prescription inclusive. No infection, no high BP, non-diabetic, not obese (Anonymous DIY, Accessed 12 February 2020).

With two other fertility posts carrying anonymity, there is a sense in which fertility-related issues are connected to medical fitness with an ultimate feeling of pride and productivity. Seeing this post through the African lens, we are provided with a thoughtful understanding that infertility brings social stigma and averting it is going anonymous (see Rüggemeier 2019). The poster is male and male infertility is one that is often concealed in the African clime except where adequately proven (Eshalomi, forthcoming). His brief but exact medical condition not only tells us he has interfaced with an allopathic consultant but also projects the potency of herbal remedy. Even though he has tried prescriptions from the group to account for temporal cures, the post is revelatory of the efficacy of herbal/traditional medicine. His request to get notified when the post is made again implies that he

will be in the comment section to harvest the best or suitable suggestions from the array of comments that will flood the comment section.

Revisiting Knowledge and Comfort Seekers

A post from Precious Mark on the FIN page, about her deceased father gained 5.5k reactions and 2.9k comment in an hour. Although these features are not the focus of this article, their usefulness is conspicuously implied, because hitting the like button is a way of expressing one's thought in a snappy and concise manner. Because clicking the reaction button is way more comfortable and faster than typing a message or even using a default message, Ariel and Avidar (2015) say its cognitive demand is low, thus encapsulating and transforming comments into emoji. However, the comments on the posts and by specificity, selected posts, are the necessary ingredients for this research focus. The numerous comments that greeted the posts by Comfort Kumashe, and the post on erectile dysfunction says something about the emotional disposition of an average human, which pushes them to share in the vulnerable moments and conditions of others. Again, some of these groups have peculiar ways of expressing their feelings towards the poster or/and the story. On the FIN group, compassionate expressions such as FIN hugs, I see you sis, FIN courage, FIN love, FIN kisses, FIN boldness are expressions that are used to show sympathy and empathy depending on the theme of the story. In cases where empathy is shown, some members go the extra mile to act at assuaging the concerns.

Indeed, members' inference about the death of loved ones and infertility reflects the emotive nature of man in tandem with sensitive issues as bareness and death. The surge of bareness and societal pressure, not letting out family expectations impede on the psychological well-being of victims. Even though these reactions and emotional support can be got from immediate people around or professional help like counsellors, psychologists, one cannot rule out an ineffective effort of the now too familiar position of family members and friends. What differs today is the drift of these experiences to a space where unfamiliar people become familiar, and strangers become relatives to seek solace in the comforting words from constructed familiar people. An opinion which Jovanovic and Leeuwen (2018) dialogic potential of social media being an environment of interaction between a vast number of familiar and unfamiliar people affirms.

Conclusion

Altogether, this study contributed to the literature on social media with a focus on how its deployment for favourable and advantageous reasons is spreading. By exploring the data, the interaction with social media seemed to have stirred up a new practice for finding not just information but answers to different challenges which is quick, easy, affordable, and relatively effective. An implication that increasing positive solutions to challenges of users would cause the transcending of physical consultation to virtual space. As the exploration of the support, suggestions, and opinions proffered on the groups reviewed bring positive results, it not only increases the numbers of members as seen in the number of people who joined both groups in one week, it also increases the sociability of the platform and the groups (Ariel and Avida 2015). The sociability, unlike many engagements on Facebook that are often inciting and degenerates into the use of abusive words and name-calling, groups are regulated to encourage civil discussion that is beneficial to all members.

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING AS AN INJUSTICE-MOTIVATED SOCIAL DISORDER IN SARAH FORSYTH'S SLAVE GIRL AND TINA OKPARA'S MY LIFE HAS A PRICE

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Abstract

The contemporary human race is confronted with several socio-political and economic challenges, such as human trafficking. One major factor that keeps motivating both the perpetrators and the victims of human trafficking is injustice. Most of the trafficked victims aspire to leave their home countries because of the perceived political, social, economic, infrastructural, and other forms of injustices. Moreover, those who engage in human trafficking are not adequately prosecuted by the judiciary and security personnel. Hence, the anti-human act continues to grow unabated. This study, therefore, examines human trafficking as an injustice-motivated social menace in Sarah Forsyth's *Slave Girl* and Tina Okpara's *My Life has a Price* with a view to interrogating the role of injustice in the proliferation of human trafficking in both English and Nigerian polities from where the primary texts are set. Predicated on the postcolonial concept of alterity which explains the sense of apartness, non-belongingness and estrangement which an individual feels, the study investigates display of power relations between victims of human trafficking and other agents responsible for the proliferation of the social scourge. The subjectivity of trafficked victims to unjust justiciary by various categories of individuals who play a significant role in the perpetuation of the modern-day slavery is explored. The study foregrounds that leadership, judiciary, and security institutions are responsible for the untrammelled continuance of human trafficking through their silences and unjust actions. Thus, to forestall modern-day slavery, political leadership, judiciary, and security agencies should ensure justice is maintained in the polity.

Key words: Human Trafficking, Injustice, *Slave Girl*, *My Life has a Price*, Postcolonial Theory

Introduction

One of the heinous and dehumanising challenges of the twenty-first century Nigeria and Britain is human trafficking across borders. This phenomenal crime has assumed a transnational trade status, encompassing all the continents of the world. It is reported that human trafficking is "the fastest growing criminal industry in the world" and "the world's third largest criminal enterprise, after drug dealing and gun running" (Lipede, 2007, p.3). This fact lends credence to the uncontrolled widespread of this twenty-first century cancerous ailment troubling the contemporary human society. Nigerians' migration to European countries has attracted significant attention, both from governments and in the media. Many Nigerians are in Europe, half of whom reside in Britain. It is posited that Italy and Belgium are usually hosts "to the second-largest group of Nigerians, and they are the most important destinations for trafficking in persons from Nigeria." (Carling, 2004, p.7)

Human trafficking has become a means of dispersal of citizens of both developed and underdeveloped nations across the globe. Several factors are, however, responsible for the growth and continuing existence of this twenty-first century slavery. These factors can be conveniently divided into two: push and pull factors. Push factors are those indices that propel people to migrate from their homeland to another place, while pull factors are such realities abroad that attract people. From time immemorial, human movement is usually precipitated by the insatiable nature of man.

It is stated that human trafficking exists in the United Kingdom which serves as a destination country for men, women, and children primarily from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe who are subjected to human trafficking for sexual slavery and forced labour, including domestic servitude. Apart from this, Britain is ranked as a "Tier 1" country by the US Department of State which issues an annual report on human trafficking. "Tier 1" countries are those "Countries whose governments fully comply with The Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The UK may also be used as a transit country – a stopping off point prior to movement to other locations (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2006).

Despite the fact the British government introduced specific legislation in 2015 to include harsher sentences and increased help for people forced into labouring, domestic servitude, sex work and other tasks, it is observed that human trafficking keeps thriving as traffickers find new ways to exploit victims (BBC, 2018). The British Home Office shows research has found that modern slavery costs the UK up to £4.3bn a year - made up of victim support, victims' lost earnings and law enforcement. It is further said that officials see new forms of exploitation that fall under the definition of modern slavery such as children being forced to

commit crimes for gangs and the recruitment of rough sleepers (BBC, 2018). Although it cannot be disputed that many of the migrants in other countries are legal migrants, there are many others whose presence in those countries is nothing but illegal. It is on record that not less than two million children are trafficked annually out of Nigeria alone (Lipede, 2007). This statistic shows the malevolence of this modern-day slavery. Some of the factors identified to have fuelled human trafficking include poverty, social imbalances, unparalleled development, official corruption, gender segregation, destructive and barbaric cultural practices, social unrest, natural disaster, and lack of the political willpower to curb the menace.

Morris (2006, p.57) maintains that:

> Sexual violence is widely thought to lie at the heart of this crisis of crime and is often read as the symptom of a failure both in the formation of the public sphere and in the restoration of previously damaged institutions like the family.

The implication of Morris' (2006) position is that sexual violence, among which human trafficking is, is made possible due to the collapse of some social institutions such as the family which is a microscopic representation of the national life itself. Thus, when the miniature space has failed, there is little that the public sphere could do. Most of the lawless and illegal acts being perpetrated in the postcolony are birthed due to the ruination of the ideal of family.

Representations of Injustice in Nigerian and English Literatures

Social commitment in Nigerian and English literatures aims at representing social ills to restore sanity to the polity. This is because of the utilitarian functions with which Nigerian and English literatures are fraught. Since no writer writes in a vacuum, social happenings provide writers with subjects about which they write. There are various social irregularities with which the twenty-first century Nigeria and Britain are plagued. All these challenges inspire writers. Tsaaior (2005) opines that authentic African literature is, essentially, that which draws its inspiration, sensibility, and vision as well as themes, imagery, tropes and entire world view from the quotidian realities and chequered experiences of Africa's historical continuum. Hence, African literature, and by extension, contemporary world literature, cannot be detached from the enabling social realities. One of the characteristic ontological features of African literature in general — and novels in particular — is that it is reactionary. The African polity is laden with disillusion syndrome, which carries with it disappointment in unfulfilled hopes leading to mixed reactions of frustration, anger, cynicism, and self-contempt (Ikiddeh, 1984).

Moreover, the English novel is viewed as a weapon in the fight against the world's irregularities. The idea of the novel mirroring reality is well presented in the works of English writers (Josipović, 2014). For instance, Dickens believed in the ethical and political potential of literature, and the novel, and he treated his fiction as a springboard for debates about moral and social reform. In his novels of social analysis, Dickens became an outspoken critic of unjust economic and social conditions (Diniejko, 2014). Thus, English novel emphasises mainly the dominant social injustice, which proves itself to go hand in hand with the prosperity's foremost by-product, capitalism as experienced in the Victorian era (Josipović, 2014).

Similarly, Nigerian literature could be said to have been given birth to because of the injustice of misrepresentations. Pioneer Nigerian writings react to myopic representations of the black race as being primitive, animalistic, cultureless, and uncivilised. Writers like Chinua Achebe engaged their literary creativity in condemning this perceived injustice. The earlier Nigerian writers respond to cultural domination by which indigenous cultural practices were demonised. Apart from the pioneering stage of Nigerian literature, the post-independence stage continues to reveal wanton perpetuation of injustices in diverse shades in the polity. For instance, environmental and human injustices have been represented in Nigerian literature. Tanure Ojaide's *The Activist*, Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* and Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* thematise the Niger Delta oil crisis which reveals the environmental hazard that oil exploration activities constitute for the Niger Delta region (Onakaogu & Onyerionwu, 2009).

Nigerian and English writers have depicted the scourge of human trafficking and the reality of injustice, promoting its unchecked growth. In Nigeria, one could count many writers whose novels have depicted the harrowing experiences of trafficked victims, including Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked*, Ifeoma Chinwuba's *Merchants of Flesh*, Ifeanyi Ajaegbo's *Sarah House*, Chika Unigwe's *On Black Sisters' Street*, Abidemi Sanusi's *Eyo*, Tina Okpara's *My Life has a Price* and Olusola Olugbesan's *Only a Canvas*. Similarly, in Britain, the following novels on human trafficking readily come to mind: Julia Bell's *Dirty Work*, Zana Muhsen's *A Promise to Nadia - the true story of a British slave*, Sophie Hayes's *Trafficked: The Terrifying True Story of a British Girl Forced into the Sex Trade*, Sarah Forsyth's *Slave Girl* and Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen*. Thus, the twenty-first century Nigerian and English writers direct their literary creativity towards rescuing humanity through their representations of this oppressive and inhuman social disorder.

Throughout history and since time immemorial, writers have been indispensable figures in the confrontation against oppressive state power and are expected by readers and

critics to take clear political stances against the state and its inhumane politics. Human trafficking is part of what contemporary writers thematise to conscientize their polity about the deathliness of the scourge.

Injustice is discriminatory and marginalised practices rooted in traditions particularly based on caste, ethnicity, class, sexism, age, and status. It is observed that acts of injustice are prevalent where unequal power relations, unequal distribution of available resources and a lack of basic social amenities are common. Effect of social injustice on the proliferation of criminality and desire to migrate in search of greener pastures cannot be overemphasised. Writing on violence and resignifications of justice in Brazil, Caldeira (2006, p.104) reveals how injustice masterminds the motif of migration among the marginalised people:

> With the social movements, rights extrapolated the labour sphere, in which they have always been legitimated and enforced in regulated form. At the root of their political mobilisation were the illegal/irregular status of their properties and the precarious situations of their neighbourhoods, which the public authorities had failed to provide with services and infrastructure, alleging exactly their irregular status. Thus, a central inspiration for these movements was an urban and collective experience of marginalisation and abandonment, despite individual efforts of integration through work and consumption.

The foregoing shows how the abandoned and ill-treated people struggled to create a space for themselves. Leadership irresponsibility displayed in failure to make provision for necessary conditions that would make life liveable for the citizenry is a factor that ignites unquenchable hunger for mobility in the citizenry. Contrastively, those in government enjoy all these facilities in excess. This kind of binary opposition in the supply of infrastructure is an act of injustice. It is because of social injustice as this that people venture into different form of criminalities to improve upon their conditions of living which should be the constitutional responsibility of government.

In addition, in dispensing justice by the judiciary, injustice is equally noticed. Criminals often buy judges as they have the financial wherewithal, while the suffering victims of criminality and now injustice remain hopelessly hopeful of the reversal of fortune one day. The court should be the last place where injustice would be perpetuated. It is, however, established that this body that should fight and end injustice could as well breed the same. Jansen and Mertens (2015, p.30) categorically state that "within any legal system it can be argued that certain judicial decisions constitute "injustice". Unjust acts of the judiciary can motivate social disorders like human trafficking, which has been a recurring subject matter in contemporary Nigerian and English literary scenes. It is against this backdrop that this

study investigates the phenomenal challenge of human trafficking as an injustice-motivated social disorder in purposively selected narratives – Sarah Forsyth's *Slave Girl* and Tina Okpara's *My Life has a Price*.

Theoretical Framework: Postcolonial Concept of Alterity

Postcolonial theory interrogates power relations between the coloniser and the colonised. The birth of postcolonial theory can be traced to the 1961 publication of the Martinique-born psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon's *the Wretched of the Earth*, in which he declares that the colonised of the world should reclaim their past for their voice to be heard. Fanon counters the domineering or dominated Eurocentric literature which sees the history, culture, and progress of the world as being coterminous with the advent of the Europeans. The idea is, therefore, "to erode the colonialist ideology by which…past had been devalued" (Barry, 1995:192). That over three-quarters of the present world has been directly and extremely affected by imperialism and colonialism; and by extension, neo-colonialism, is indisputable (Tiffin, 1997, p.95).

Human trafficking displays power relations between the trafficker and the trafficked victim. Hence, in the interrogation of the phenomenon as an injustice-motivated social order, the postcolonial concept of alterity is adopted as the framework. Alterity is derived from the Latin alteritas, meaning 'the state of being other or different; diversity, otherness' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2000). Alterity is closely associated with Bakhtin's (1994) concept of 'exotopy' or 'outsideness'. In postcolonial discourse, the term has often been used interchangeably with otherness/othering and difference. It is established that "the self-identity of the colonising subject, indeed the identity of imperial culture, is inextricable from the alterity of colonised others, an alterity determined, according to Spivak, by a process of othering." (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p.10).

Within the context of human trafficking, the colonising subject and colonised others are those agents propagating the growth of human trafficking and the victims of human trafficking respectively. This conceptual framework explains the sense of apartness, non-belongingness, and estrangement which an individual feels. This concept is, therefore, employed to examine the exhibition of power relations between victims of human trafficking and several other agents responsible for the proliferation of the social scourge. Thus, the subjectivity of trafficked victims to unjust justiciary by various categories of individuals who play a significant role in the perpetuation of the modern-day slavery is explored through the lens of alterity. From metaphorical perspective, the connection between the victims of human trafficking victims and those responsible for the perpetual existence of the challenge

could be likened to that between the dominated colonised nations and the domineering colonisers.

Overview of The Selected Texts

Tina Okpara is a twenty-first century Nigerian writer who captures the ordeal of human trafficking graphically. In reality, Tina Okpara is serially 'sexploited' by Super Eagles star, Godwin Okpara, in France. It is this harrowing experience that she fictionalises in *My Life has a Price*. In her commentary on *My Life has a Price*, Okpara (2012) states that the novel chronicles how the narrator who is also the writer is adopted at age 13 by the Okparas and taken to France. Linda, Okpara's wife, then enslaves her for five years and turns a blind eye to the sexual abuse in the hand of her husband. Tina Okpara's decision to document her experience seven years after she regained freedom is to raise awareness and help other girls who might be going through the same horrendous experience: "One day, I told myself that if I refused testifying, other girls will continue to experience modern slavery." (Tina Okpara in an interview) The essence of this testimonial narrative is, therefore, to open the eyes of people to the horrific challenge of human trafficking and sex slavery. The memoir serves as a mirror through which five years old Tina's tortuous and dehumanising experience in the hands of her adoptive parents, Linda, and Godwin Okpara, is brought to light. The novel has been translated into French *Ma Vie a un Prix* by Jolie Jodter.

On the other hand, Sarah Forsyth is an English writer. Her *Slave Girl* is a biographical novel of the painful experience of the main character, Sarah. Sarah is sexually abuse right from the age of three by the very people who are supposed to look after and protect her. She manages to overcome the hurt and heartbreak of her troubled and horrific childhood and build a new and happy life for herself as a nursery nurse. One day, Sarah comes across a newspaper advert for a job in a crèche in Amsterdam. Thrilled by the prospect of a fresh start away from Newcastle and all the memories it holds, she excitedly signs up for the job. Unfortunately, within minutes of arriving in Amsterdam, her life begins to crumble. She discovers that there is neither any crèche nor any job in existence. Fed cocaine and cannabis, and forced at gunpoint to work as a prostitute in the red-light district of Amsterdam, Sarah is turned from a young, innocent English girl into a desperate and terrified crack whore. Riddled with fear about what her pimps would do to her if they catch her trying to run away, it takes Sarah almost a year to find the strength to fight back and escape. Unlike many of the girls that she is forced to live and work besides, she does get away (Goodreads, 2009).

Representations of Injustice in Okpara's *My Life has a Price* and Forsyth's *Slave Girl*

One of the significant visions of contemporary Nigerian and English writers is to produce a literature of praxis, a concrete, activist literature with a clamorous statement about the social situation. The sociological and psychological dimensions of Nigerian and English novel form are closely related. Indeed, the novel's close attention to the relationship between society and the self or the individual is one of its defining features (Spurgin, 2006; Osundare, 2007). Therefore, literary writers could not embrace passivity and nonchalance towards the predicament of their cultural milieu. Writers do not only describe the world but also modify it.

There have been some critical studies on the literary representations of human trafficking. For instance, Reinares (2012) interrogates recurrent motifs of sex trafficking or abduction in order to establish transnational connections that could speak of a crisis that has been exacerbated with the ascendancy of deregulated finance capital especially after decolonisation, when third-world women's bodies have become readily disposable commodities. Furthermore, Robertson's (2012) study entitled "The Injustice of Sex Trafficking and the Efficacy of Legislation" gives an overview of different nations' attempts at legislating against the perpetual proliferation of this modern-day slavery. The preponderance of extant studies on the phenomenal challenge of human trafficking, which used to be a 'hidden' underground crime, attests to the fact that it has not escaped the public eye.

The emergence and sustenance of human trafficking could be said to be made possible by the presence of injustice. Uneven distribution of wealth across the globe propels some people to embark on migration from one place to the other in search of greener pastures. Thus, social inequalities of various forms often enhance the perpetuation of human trafficking. Okpara's *My Life has a Price* and Forsyth's *Slave Girl* foreground the role of injustice in the proliferation of sex trafficking. The narratives explore how different categories of individuals contribute to injustice which promotes the existence of human trafficking in their separate polities.

Injustice breeds injustice; members of the judiciary who are supposed to uphold justice and defend the defenceless have failed in their constitutional and professional responsibilities. In Forsyth's *Slave Girl*, it is revealed that the court does not begin the trial of the arrested masterminds of human trafficking until two years after their arrest which implies a delay in administrative activities. Writing on 'Law and Disorder in the Postcolony,' Comaroff & Comaroff (2006, p.vii) affirmatively state that:

> Yes, postcolonies are especially, excessively, distinctively violent, and disorderly. Yes, they are sinking ever further into a mire of conflict, coercion, and chaos. Yes, this does seem to be a chronic, not a temporary, state of being. The evidence is taken to be, well, self-evident; so much so that little heed has been paid to the possibility that something deeper may be at issue here, something inherent in the unfolding conjuncture everywhere of violence, sovereignty, il/legality, modernity.

The foregoing is an indication that the postcolony is overwhelmed with lawlessness, violence, legalisation of illegality and disorder. In Forsyth's *Slave Girl*, Sarah is disappointed to hear that someone like John Reece, who is responsible for her trafficking, is sentenced to just two years imprisonment, while Sally gets seven months imprisonment. Without mincing words, a judicial leniency is an act of injustice. Sarah feels cheated by the judicial system that protects criminals. She is also disappointed that the Dutch judicial system prevents the identity of the criminals from being revealed. These actions of the judiciary fuel the perpetual existence of all forms of inhuman acts, including human trafficking. Judges' perversion of justice breeds crime rate in contemporary human society. Similarly, the polarisation of the world into child and adult worlds complicates justice. According to Sarah,

> … I found myself growing angry when the police explained to me that in many cases it has been a child's word against that of an adult – and that of an adult's voice always seems louder and more important. (*Slave Girl*, 100)

In other words, the victimised and subjugated children are prevented from being heard by the unjust and dictatorial adults. The narrativization of Sarah's trafficking experience foregrounds the issue of dominance. There is constant social stratification between the child and adult. Adult's superior posture and child's inferiority are evident in the way Sarah's plight is handled. Sarah's voice is not heard, whereas her abuser is given recognition. In a world where exploited children are treated as subaltern, injustice continues to be the order of the day. Morton (2010) explains that marginality is one of the privileged metaphors of postcolonial studies. It is from the margins of colonial subordination and oppression on the grounds of race, class, gender, or religion that postcolonial writers and theorists claim political and moral authority to contest or oppose the claims of a dominant European imperial culture. Similarly, Huggan (2001, p.20) posits that

> marginality represents a challenge to the defining imperial "centre" …. The embrace of marginality is, above all, an oppositional discursive strategy that flies in the face of hierarchical social structures and hegemonic cultural codes.

The relationship between the trafficking victims and their traffickers is like that between the colonised and the colonisers. The society is programmed in such a way that the adult is

placed above the child. This literally and literarily foregrounds adult's visibility and hearability, and child's invisibility, sublimation and voicelessness. Thus, the continuous and unjust silencing of trafficked children proliferates inhuman acts against children. The effects of adult's injustice on the troubled children are depression and disillusionment as they feel alienated from the human race. This sense of non-belongingness, marginalisation and inbetweeness further widens the psychic wound of victims of modern-day slavery as represented by Sarah.

Furthermore, as part of the litigation process in Okpara's *My Life has a Price*, Tina needs a lawyer that would defend her. She chooses Martine Peron as her solicitor. Tina realises that she is not fighting the battle alone. For human trafficking and domestic violence to be eradicated, there is a need for the combinatorial effort of all and sundry. The last trial takes place on Tuesday, 29 May 2007, at the Court of Versailles. The court is filled to the brim as many people come to witness the judgement on a famous footballer's case. In the same manner that Godwin's fame, football acumen and prowess attract an audience, his notoriety pulls a crowd. Many witnesses, including the police officer that attends to Tina and accompanies her to the Okparas' in Chatou to pick her documents, Tina's room-mate (Nefertiti) and her two teachers also come to support her in the fight for her freedom. The witnesses' accounts are not in favour of either Godwin or Linda. When called upon to make her statement, Linda repeats the same lies she tells earlier. It is during the trial that Tina becomes aware that she is bought like an animal or a thing for three hundred and seventy-five euros, which is the amount the Okparas gives Tina's father to cushion his financial quagmire. Linda, however, knows in her mind, that the money is the price for acquiring Tina. Godwin, Mamie, and Tina also respond to questions raised by the judge. Godwin openly apologises to Tina for the hurt his family might have caused her.

Meanwhile, Linda remains adamant. This reveals Godwin as a round character who is remorseful for his (in)actions, while Linda is a flat character because she does not undergo any positive transformation all through the narrative. Tina is now a completely free person. The implication of this is that she will have to be independent. She now stays alone. For long, Tina remains in the prison of her memory. She confesses: "I know that Godwin and Linda are behind bars. Alas, there is no prison in which to lock away my nightmares. At times, during the night, my horrible memories pierce my heart with their poisoned fangs." (*My Life has a Price*, p. 181)

Nevertheless, she takes her destiny in her hands. When people ask about her ambition, Tina always replies to them that she wants to become a nurse. She immediately starts working towards realising her life goal. She obtains a certificate issued by the Red Cross to

become a caregiver for the elderly. She is hired to work with nurses and nursing aids. She brings joy and energy to the senior citizens. Through this avenue, her mental wound gets cured. Tina never allows her sad antecedent to weigh her down. She does not want to be pitied or given preferential treatment as a result of all she has undergone in life. As much as possible, Tina tries to hide her past. She detests stigmatisation against her. Most often, she denies knowing Godwin Okpara when people ask her whether she is related to him. Tina continues to live a normal life and to tell people her story. Above all sadness, pains, frustration and exploitation, Okpara's *My Life has a Price* is a narrative of hope. Through this narrativization, the writer conscientizes liberated victims of human trafficking not to look down on themselves. Like Tina Okpara, they could change their story of ruination to that of fulfilment. This writer, therefore, makes "a call to action, a revolutionary cry of defiance, an affirmation of existence, accusation of the oppressor" (Ojo-Ade, 1996, p.123).

In addition, human trafficking thrives because there are no enough serious-minded and responsible security agents that will combat it. As depicted in Okpara's *My Life has a Price*, the judge sentences Linda to fifteen years imprisonment, while Godwin and Mamie are sentenced to thirteen- and five-years imprisonment respectively. Thus, the novel provides a kaleidoscopic survey of a morally bankrupt society and posits that different categories of people are culpable of fuelling the scourge of human trafficking (Agho, 1995). From this analysis, twenty-first century Nigerian novelists adequately draw the attention of their cultural milieu to its own flaws and problems in order to eliminate such from society (Nwahunanya, 2012).

The role of the justice system in the propagation or stoppage of the menace of modern-day slavery is depicted in these narratives. However, there appear to be some dissimilarities in the representation of the judiciary in the two national narratives. Lack of justice is responsible for the unrestricted spread of human trafficking in the world. Forsyth's *Slave Girl* reveals the problem of delay in the justice system as the trial of perpetrators of human trafficking is delayed for two years. Sarah (in *Slave Girl*) is disappointed to hear that John Reece, who is responsible for her trafficking, is sentenced to just two years imprisonment, while Sally, one of Reece' cohorts, gets seven months imprisonment. The global justice system is plagued with judicial leniency, which is tantamount to an act of injustice. Judges' perversion of justice breeds crime rate in contemporary human society. Therefore, the judiciary is challenged to be awake to her responsibility in order to curtail the scourge of modern-day slavery.

As part of the litigation process, Tina's lawyer (in Okpara's *My Life has a Price*) plays a quintessential role in making sure that his client gets the deserved justice. It is, however,

surprising that the judiciary is positively represented in the Nigerian novel (Okpara's *My Life has a Price*) unlike what is viewed in the English novel (Forsyth's *Slave Girl*). This divergence implies that it is not all the time that the developing world does not get things right and vice versa. It validates the fact that there is no perfect society. Every human society has its shortcomings and strengths. Nevertheless, the essence of this depiction is to prick the conscience of the judiciary and awaken her to ensure the promotion of sound justice system and be more responsible and committed in the discharge of her constitutional duties.

Conclusion

The Justice system has an important role to play in the war against human trafficking. It has been observed that the menace persists because there is no severe and commensurate punishment for perpetrators of this dastardly act against humanity. Sarah Forsyth and Tina Okpara who are contemporary writers, therefore, call upon members of the judiciary to uphold justice in the discharge of their duties in order to restore sanity and lost humanity.

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN COMMUNITY POLICING IN UMUAHIA, ABIA STATE OF NIGERIA: ỌKỌNKỌ SOCIETY AS A MODEL[7]

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Abstract

Community policing in this paper implies using a people's language and culture to direct their behaviour for peace and security of the community. For people of Umuahia, Igbo language and culture mirror their ways of life. In their interactions with one another, they reason, and act based on the dictates of the language and culture; and when any of them errs, punishment is administered according to the language and culture. However, a custodian of language and culture acts as overseer and interpreter of the culture in order to maintain peace and where conflict arises, manage it. Ọkọnkọ society is responsible for maintaining peace and security in Umuahia and some other southern Igbo communities. Through its social interventions, land disputes especially are settled without recourse to the state police or the law courts. The paper outlines indicators to show that community policing can be effective without the use of weapons, rather, by simply respecting the powers of language and culture and traditional institutions like Ọkọnkọ society which uses its social practices to maintain order. The paper also looks at the role and efficacy of proverbs and cultural symbols as aspects of language that Ọkọnkọ society uses to instil discipline and decorum among the people of Umuahia.

Keywords: Community policing, Igbo language and culture, Umuahia, Ọkọnkọ Society

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[7]this paper is based on ethnographic research carried out in Umuahia, Abia State of Nigeria in 2015 by the author for his doctorate. Michael Forster's model of hermeneutics on the interpretation of utterances and understanding of texts; Roland Barthes' semiotic theory of signs that deals with cultural significations; and Can-Seng Doi's cultural mediation theory on the maintenance of cultural systems were the theories applied for the study.

Introduction

The people of Umuahia are predominantly farmers and traders. They engage in many cultural activities especially: New Yam festival, marriage rites, burial rites, and the annual Ekpe cultural dance. Umuahia is the capital of Abia State in South-eastern Nigeria. Based on the 2006 Nigeria census, her population is 359,230. Umuahia was established as an administrative centre by the British Colonial Administration in the early 20th century. By 1916, Umuahia was well known as an agricultural market centre. Being one of the few towns with railways, Umuahia is a collecting point for crops such as yam, cassava, corn, taro, citrus fruits and palm oil and kernels. Umuahia people produce palm oil in quantum (Aniga, 2017:6).

Umuahia is made up of two local government areas: Umuahia North and Umuahia South. Five clans make up Umuahia, and each has its distinctive dialect, though all the dialects are similar to each other and are mutually intelligible. The five constituting clans are Ibeku and Ọhụhụ forming Umuahia North Local Government Area; and Umuopara, Olokoro and Ụbakala making up Umuahia South Local Government Area. In each of the clans, the villages observe specific market schedules for their markets and their cultural engagements like New Yam Festivals and conflict management sessions. The four market days are *Eke, Orie, Afo* and *Nkwo*. Ibenye-Ugbala (2008: 20) gives an insight of towns with calendrical markets in Igboland which he describes as, '…dating from prehistorical till date.' Umuahia markets were given as examples by Ibenye-Ugbala. Umuahia people also bear names depicting the market days in which they were born. Hence, it is common to find people who bear Ekeoma, Okorie, Okonkwo, Nwafo, Nwankwo, Nworie, Okeke and Okafor.

Ọkọnkọ is like a religion in southern Igboland of which Umuahia is a part. Its social aspect is tolerant to the Christians who seek them out in resolving matters concerning land disputes especially. Ọkọnkọ's social practices are therefore open to all irrespective of gender or affiliation. Ọkọnkọ is a society whose practices are both social and spiritual. It is open to men alone. It has different initiation stages before a member becomes full-fledged. The social aspect of Ọkọnkọ is open to the public. These social practices involve playing a crucial role in traditional conflict management of the people on one hand, and on the other, filling several executive functions in the society. For the former, they are involved in mediation in community conflicts, especially in land disputes. The spiritual or the confidential side of the Ọkọnkọ members is not the object of this research. This confidential aspect of society makes them be a secret society. All their activities in this aspect are nocturnal, and their language is esoteric. Their social language is, however, exoteric using the Igbo language verbally and nonverbally as the situations demand.

In this paper, I shall first explicate the cooperation between language and culture and linking them to Igbo culture as it relates to the people of Umuahia. Next is an exploration of Igbo diglossia, where I have tried to explain the different types of dialects with recourse to what scholars have written about the Igbo language. The crux of the paper comes under the subtitle: *Ọkọnkọ society as a Community Policing Instrument*. In this segment, I have argued that the society is eminently qualified to be called a Community Policing Instrument because its antecedent has proved that it has been the custodian of language and culture of the Igbo people and has played vital roles in the sustenance of peace in the land.

The last segment of the paper, before the conclusion, deals with twenty semiotic symbols and ten proverbs, all of which are from the fieldwork I conducted in Umuahia in 2015. These semiotic symbols and proverbs have been presented herein without much interpretation due to limited space. However, they are meant to create awareness on how Ọkọnkọ society could use semiotics and proverbs (both being an aspect of language and culture) in building sustenance peace, on the one hand, and policing the community to reduce conflicts on the other hand.

Language and Culture: Umuahia in Igbo Culture

Let us first assess what some scholars have said about language and culture before discussing Igbo culture as it relates to Umuahians. For Benedict (1971:31), culture is a consistent pattern of thought and action. That is to say, the thinking, feeling, and acting of a people are embedded in culture (Harris, 1983). In other words, culture makes the human experience look significant (Rosaldo, 1989). Moreover, towards achieving this goal, the role of language comes to mind as language and culture are symbiotic. See Risager (2006) for further explication of the symbiosis between language and culture. For effective communication, there must be a culturally transmitted pattern of meaning: verbal or nonverbal (Taylor, 1991:91).

Language and culture rub off on each other. They are crucial to the proper interpretation of discourse or decoding of a message. Lack of knowledge about cultural traits in a language prohibits full comprehension of the message being passed across. In other words, meaningful discussion of language cannot be fully achieved in absolute neglect of culture. Language and culture as a means of conveying thought (including in conflict management and peace-building) situations, can have a psychological impact on things people communicate about (Tomasello, 2003). Even expression of emotion in the face, body and mode of speech shows that bodily expression (language) of emotions varies across activities (Wierzbicka, 1999).

This is obvious that conflict managers should be watchful in the course of their duties as 'little' things like the body movement and the state of the actors' faces could indicate whether talks are being negative or positive. The mental imagery experiment varies from one culture to the other. This implies, according to Kovcses (2002) that no two cultures may view things the same way.

Umuahians speak the Igbo language, the mother tongue of the five south-eastern states of Nigeria (Emenanjo, et al. 2011:2). These states include Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The Igbo language is also spoken in parts of Delta, Rivers, Edo, Benue, and Akwa Ibom States and it is spoken as a first or second language by, at least, 35 million people (Emanajo et al. 2011:2). In this segment, we shall discuss Igbo dialectology and diglossia as well as aspects of cultural expressions in Igbo.

Igbo language is a tonal language and comprises various dialects (Fardon and Furmis, 1994:66). Of these dialects, Owerri and Umuahia groups belong to the central Igbo standard, which is accepted by missionaries, writers, publishers, and Cambridge University (Oraka, 1983:35). Emenanjo et al. (2011:3) give more light on the language:

> It is also one of the three Nigerian languages recommended in the National Policy on education to be taught both as first and second languages in the secondary school system. Furthermore, it is available as a language of a study in many tertiary institutions in Nigerian and outside Nigeria. It is also one of the three Nigerian languages for which Microsoft Corporation is developing necessary Information Technology (I.T.) Software.

Returning to the culture of the Umuahia people, we now consider the culinary aspect. Umuahians are known for *okazi* and *achara* soup, which is the only soup eaten during marriage and burial ceremonies. The soup is among the cultural trademarks of the people, and they are proud of it.

Conflict management and peace-building activities take place at town halls, market squares, and even on farms if the conflict is over a piece of land. For the latter, the preliminary conflict management may be in town halls and market squares. However, the farm or land in dispute must be visited. The verdicts sometimes are on the farm or land. When a particular conflict lingers on so much, and no breakthrough is in sight, the *Ọkọnkọ* secret cult is consulted for spiritual interpretation and oath-taking. It is the last option. The two parties in conflict swear before the oracle. Sometimes, it is the accused that swear, calling on the oracle to kill him before a year if he or she is guilty as accused. The accused dies within a year should he be guilty. However, surviving beyond the period specified in the

oath exonerates him of any accusations. The survival is celebrated by the oath-taker and his family and friends.

Of all the aforementioned cultural beliefs of the *Umuahians, Ọji*, the kola nut, plays a significant role. No celebration is done without consulting the ancestors. Doing this entails breaking of the kola nut and pouring of libation using palm-wine. As such, consulting the ancestors during burial rites, marriage ceremonies and festivals are done with *Ọji-Igbo*, not *gworo*, the kola nut type eaten by the Hausas. Compared with the *Gworo, Ọji-Igbo* is smaller in size yet for the Umuahians, and it holds great spiritual significance. One could contain as much as seven lobes. The more the lobes of broken *'Ọji-Igbo'* for any incantation, the more successful the occasion. This is the people's belief.

Fashion has a central place in the lives of the people of Umuahia. The women dress like every other Igbo woman – a scarf, a blouse, and two long wrappers, one tied with a rope while the other is placed on top and can be adjusted at will. Women of Umuahia are known to have very fine sartorial taste, often having uniforms for all occasions. Umuahia men's pattern of grooming differs from those of other Igbo men from Enugu, Onitsha, and Owerri. A titled Umuahia man wears a special cap with a tail that flings. This is different from other Igbo men's caps that resemble European Cowboy hats. To attend important occasions, an Umuahia man wears a singlet with a tied George wrapper and staff. The youth normally dress in European style. However, the girls and the boys emulate their mothers and fathers during weddings and special occasions. That is why an Umuahia bride goes to her new husband's home in full Umuahia woman's attire; while the groom dresses like the men he has joined.

New yam festival is common in the entire Igboland. However, it is unique in Umuahia. This is so because the festival goes with the *Ekpe* cultural dance. The beating of *Ekpe* is like a war song. The youth and the elderly participate. The youth dance and run around, while the elders, who must belong to the *Ọkọnkọ* cult, perform the spiritual aspect of the dance. The climax of *Ekpe* in any clan of Umuahia is the *Ekpe* masquerade's cutting off the head of a goat, which must be severed at the first strike. Immediately the masquerade cuts off the head, jubilant youths hang the head on a strong stick and begin to dance with it around the villages. It is a symbol of victory and ancestral approval for the new yam to be celebrated. Nevertheless, if the masquerade fails to cut the head at the first attempt, gloom envelops the people as this is ominous.

The annual New Yam Festival takes place every August. The event attracts a large number of well-wishers and visitors. New yams are harvested, and they are used in preparing pepper soup (*mmiri oku ji*) or pounded yam for consumption with *utazi* soup which

is the most popular soup on the day. The yam can be roasted too and eaten with raw palm oil, especially by the elders. Other supplementary refreshments like palm wine, kola nuts, stockfish, meat, oil beans, and garden eggs are served lavishly.

The event is heralded with gunshots on the eve of the New Yam Festival. These shots assure or confirm that the festival must take place the following day. Early in the morning of the festival, the traditional rulers, along with their aides, begin the event in their palaces. After that, the event starts in every home. The five clans choose different days for their festival.

Coming to the traditional justice system of Umuahia people, it is historically and contemporarily gerontocratic. What this means is that the institution that dispenses justice is made up of elders of integrity. The youth do not constitute those that dispense justice. They only observe. Older men and women of integrity participate in collective justice dispensation in conflict management and peace-building. However, only men are involved in land dispute resolution. Women manage matters concerning women, like prescribing appropriate punishment to women who have erred in the society and settling and advising women in trade disputes among market women. Group of men and women of integrity headed by traditional chiefs also resolve issues based on cultural stipulations and using the Igbo language as a medium. When a party is found guilty, some fine is imposed to act as a deterrent (Aniga, 2017:7).

Igbo Diglossia

This is a situation in which two languages or two forms of a language are used under different conditions in a community. When people who share the same dialect are together in community meetings or conflict management sessions, they normally use their dialect for effective communication. Nevertheless, the central Igbo Language is normally spoken in schools comprising peoples of different dialects. The central Igbo Language is also used in state documentation, on radio and television.

The dialects and the central Igbo Language can be seen as diglossia. In other words, while dialects are used for informal purposes, the Central Igbo Language with a standard orthography and pronunciation is used for formal use. For instance, during Igbo Nation Conferences, speakers should be less dialectical and should speak in the standard everybody would easily understand.

The commonest dialects in the Igbo Language cut across the entire Igbo Language speaking states. The culture comprises the various customs, practices, and traditions. The

culture also comprises recently borrowed, external cultures, visual arts, music and dance form, attires, cuisine, and language that now constitute the culture of the Igbo. The Igbo culture begins from kindred affinity.

The kinsmen, normally called *Umu nna,* are the strength of Igbo society. The ethics of the Igbo society are imbibed in the *Umu nna* mechanism (Agbasiere, 2000:12). The women gather for deliberations from time to time to discuss the welfare of their households. The Igbo culture recognises a calendar of four days making up a week, and till date determines market days (Holbrook, 2007:35). Nwogu (1975), Onwuejegwu (1975), Ejiọfọr (1984), Nwachukwu (1995) and Nkwo (1984) are among the known Igbo writers who have written on Igbo language and culture. Regarding the Igbo worldview, Nwogu (1975:194) writes on the role language plays, giving special attention to proverbs.

> It is necessary; I believe, to make a distinction between the figurative statement in a given proverb and the inference that can be drawn from the proverb, with regards to the worldview of the Igbo.

What Nwogu is emphasising is that the Igbo language is made more unique by the use of proverbs. They do not see it as a tool for creating imagery, but a cultural tool that explains how witty a person is. Madu (1996:189) defines a proverb as a '… condensed wisdom is drawn from experience…' He goes ahead to quote the following definitions by Kjar, '… anonymous traditional sayings about human life', and for Barley, '… a standard statement of moral or categorical imperatives in fixed metaphorical paradigmatic form…' and lastly for Mulyumba wa Mamba, '… a proposition or group of propositions deriving from the experiences of the wise men of the society affirming either clearly or metaphorically popular indisputable truths.' All of these definitions put together makes it clear that people's proverbs are the people's laconic means of expressing their thoughts.

Writing on cultural revival in Igbo land, Ejiọfọr (1984:114-8) outlines why the Igbo language should be respected.

> … If I have spent so much time pointing out the weakness of the English language, and the strength of Igbo, my objective is not to ridicule English… No… My objective is to show that an objective assessment is made. English which is learnt by 'everybody is in many cases more complicated than Igbo, which is too much despised.

Even though the author is sentimental about his language, suffice it to say that his sentiment is not novel. Every person sees in his language, better qualities than in others.

One Igbo proverb asks: *'Onye si na ofe nneya siri adighi uto?'* which translates to, 'Who dare say that his mother's soup is not sweet?' Because an Igbo man owns and speaks the Igbo language, he should be at home with its pronunciation and tenses even if the person did not go to a formal school and may therefore not be able to read and write it. Ejiọfọr seems to be saying that an Igbo man certainly should be able to communicate his ideas better in Igbo as he pronounces the words well and surely knows the meaning of the words. There is no doubt that proverbs constitute a significant place in African cultures, the Igbo inclusive. Nwogu (1975) has stated this fact in his work, but the role proverbs play during conflict management sessions has not been looked into.

On Ejiọfọr's account, he has sentimentally stated in his argument why the Igbo language is superior to the English language. However, he has not, in any way, pointed out the significance of this superiority in the course of conflict management and peace-building. The Igbo language has a significant place and role in the conflict management and peace-building in Umuahia, and in fact, the entire Igboland. In the course of conflict management and peace-building in the town hall, market square or even in the Ọfọ and Ogu shrine, language plays a role that cannot be overemphasised. For instance, the *Ọfọ* holder while presenting sacrifices speaks in Igbo languages all his divinations, libations and incantations are not in English, but in the Igbo language. The interaction between the people and the *Ọfọ* holder is in the Igbo language. The verdict coming from the shrine to the conflicting parties is in the Igbo language

Ọkọnkọ society as a Community Policing Instrument

Ọkọnkọ is a society whose practices are both social and spiritual and 'has been on the vanguard for the preservation of the Igbo language and culture.' (Aniga, 2017:137). It is open to men alone. It has different initiation stages before a member becomes full-fledged. The social aspect of Ọkọnkọ is open to the public. These social practices involve, on the one hand, playing a crucial role in traditional conflict management of the people, and on the other, filling several executive functions in the society. For the former, they are involved in mediation in community conflicts, especially in land disputes. The spiritual or the confidential side of the Ọkọnkọ members is not the object of this research. This area of society makes them be seen as a secret society. All their activities in this aspect are nocturnal, and their language is esoteric. Their social language is, however, exoteric. Generally, the group is called a secret society since they do not reveal their spiritual activities to outsiders and therefore use esoteric language among themselves.

Ọkọnkọ people use basic semiotic symbols like the palm frond (a symbol of authority and peace which when hung in a disputed land announces the presence of the society), kola

nut, and palm wine in their day to day social and cultural engagements. Danesi (2004:4) describes a sign as anything that stands for something other than itself and gives examples like colour, a gesture, a wink, and an object. Danesi (2004:16) says that there exists between a sign and a perceived interpretation of what he calls representation. In other words, it is the representation of a sign or utterance in a given culture that leads to interpretation. Gongs, bells, and drums, according to Sebeok (2001:11) are an example of signals. These signals are some of the instruments of the Ọkọnkọ.

Ọkọnkọ society is responsible for enforcing verdicts in the village assembly. Only men with proven integrity are allowed into the fold. Anybody that does not belong to *Ọkọnkọ* is called *okpo* (meaning an empty person), and such persons are not allowed to join the Ọkọnkọ members when they are in session. The first stage of initiation to *Ọkọnkọ* is *ida iyi* which can be likened to 'baptism.' This takes place at midnight when the old members gather around the prospective member who is about to be 'baptised' with *ọmụ* (palm frond). The priest now reveals the seven secrets of the Ọkọnkọnites to the newly initiated, which he must not reveal to anybody. *Akang, mboko* and *Ekpe* are the three stages of initiations. One becomes an *Ezumezu* (a knower of all) after the three stages.

Uchendu (1965:17) writes that Igbo judicial matters are *ad hoc* affairs whereby the injured party takes the initiative by appealing to the head of the compound of the offender or a body of arbitrators for redress. If this fails, the injured party may beat the village drum to summon the *Ama ala* (the kinsmen). The special friends of the litigants are invited to help resolve the matter. Other institutions which may be appealed to for judicial opinions include age-grade societies, *dibia* fraternities, various title making societies, and *Ọkọnkọ* society. Jurisdiction may be taken beyond human tribunals, and such supernatural tribunals as the oracles are consulted in the dispensation of justice. The oracles are the final court of appeal; they are consulted when all the tribunals of the land fail to deliver satisfactory judgement to the litigants.

Ọkọnkọ secret cult plays a crucial role in the traditional conflict management of the people of Umuahia. Isichei (1977:91) described this secret society as one filled with several important executive and judicial functions and was widespread among the southern Igbo till date. Ọkọnkọ secret cult exists in Umuahia judicial system. In an interview conducted in 1972, Isichei (1977:92) interviewed Uwaga Okeanya, an *Ọkọnkọ* priest from Ogbodi Ukwu, Umuopara. Among other things the about 90-year old priest said was the admission that *Ọkọnkọ* enforced the verdicts of the *ama ala* (the village assembly) and was a kind of a court of appeal. Part of the interview is as follows:

> In the past, if the Ọkọnkọ music was played near the house of anybody, anxiety was created as to the reason of the beating of the drum, and if a palm leaf was left behind in the main's house, it meant that the person was to appear before the Ọkọnkọ court of appeal … wherever there was a statement in any Ọkọnkọ decisions, the Ọkọnkọ society would consult other recognised Ọkọnkọ societies in other areas for mediation… One thing I must tell you is that most of these things which the white men came to destroy are still with us and shame to us if we abandon the religion and practices of our father.

Uwalaka (1996:09) gives an insight into what Igbo conflict management entails:

> The parties involved usually consult the leader of the Ọfọ men who announces to them the demands which Ọfọ has imposed on them and which must be fulfilled before Ọfọ lends an ear to their complaints. Usually, for the settlement of a land case, each of the disputing parties is expected by Ọfọ to produce a cock, a male dog, four kola nuts, four alligator pepper, four jars of palm wine, a bottle of home-made gin, eight dishes of fufu.

The rather expensive demands of Ọfọ notwithstanding, the Igbo believe in the fairness of its judgment. In what he terms the crisis of distinctions, Anyanwu (1989:104) describes *Ọfọ* and *Ogu* as:

> … two distinct traditional symbols which, because they are so commonly used together, appear to be the same symbol. In this apparent marriage of symbols, *Ogu*, which forms part of everyday life of the Igbo, although very few realise it, tends to be submerged in *Ọfọ*, to which it gives spiritual force.

Ọfọ is a piece of wood symbolising a symbol of authority. *Ọfọ* men are revered as upright men whose words are truth. They are seen as representing the ancestors. For the Igbo people, they have this culture that whoever violates the law has not only angered the people but the ancestors and the gods (Nkwo, 1984:52). Uwalaka (1996:05) further explains how the Igbo man views the *Ọfọ*:

> *Ọfọ* is a divine power that directs the affairs of men all over the universe. *Ọfọ* is usually involved with its twin sister, *Ogu*. *Ọfọ* is given precedence as the firstborn. However, whoever holds *Ọfọ* automatically holds *Ogu*.

The *Ọfọ* holder, who is, in our context, a peacemaker, represents the Igbo language and cultural identities. Because the *Ọfọ* system is the central base of Igbo justice, its custodians are looked upon to manage conflicts effectively in line with the custom and tradition of Igbo people and their philosophy (Uwalaka 1996:25).

These authors have explicitly highlighted the powers and relevance of *Ọfọ* and *Ogu* in Igbo people's conflict management. Both *Ọfọ* holder and the *Ọfọ* itself are revered. They are seen as sacred, but the question these writers have failed to address is the issue of how the *Ọfọ* and *Ogu* are related. Does the *Ọfọ* holder speak English or Igbo to the gods? Furthermore, what is the significance? The authors did not highlight the place of language in the process of finding justice. In Igboland, it is believed that kola nut does not understand any other language other than the Igbo language. In light of this, the researcher believes that the role of language, which is our focus, must be addressed because of its significance.

Semiotic Symbols and Proverbs by Ọkọnkọ

This segment of the research tries to address two issues. One, some suggested semiotic interpretations of basic symbols and instruments by the Ọkọnkọ society with the view to determining their cultural and linguistic relevance. Two, some of the proverbs the respondents raised during interviews, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and even during non-participant observation.

The Semiotic Symbols of Ọkọnkọ

Ọmụ

Ọmụ to the man on the street is a palm frond. Nevertheless, to the Ọkọnkọ society, *ọmụ* is a physical, legal, and spiritual symbolism. *Ọmụ* is the flag of the Ọkọnkọ society. It is respected, honoured, and revered as done to national flags of countries. *Ọmụ* is the first language of Ọkọnkọ society. Its physical outlook differs from its ancestral and spiritual significance.

Uhie/Ikpo/Abia

Each of these instruments is a medium of communication. The three instruments form the Ọkọnkọ media. *Uhie* (wooden) is arguably the most popular. It forms the emblem of Ọkọnkọ society with *ọmụ*. *Ikpo* is a metal gong while *Abia* is a special drum whose sound is intimidating and instils fear. It seems the *Ikpo* is for in-house use for initiations of new members during *idi iyi* (baptism) and *ikpu-ulo* (confirmation) which confirms a person as *ezumezu* (a full-fledged Ọkọnkọ man).

Ọfọ

Ọfọ is both a concept and an action. For the former, *ọfọ* is a wooden instrument which symbolises authority and spirituality. Holding the *ọfọ* is like holding a covenant box. It

stands for truth, integrity, and impartiality. The latter meaning of *ọfọ* is an *action* where utterances are made using strong words that depict swearing, prayer, and even a curse for whoever errs or misleads the others.

Ọba

The elders prefer to drink with *oba,* a special deep local cup made from *oba* tuber. In Ọkọnkọ, they drink using one *oba* during meetings and occasions. The *oba* stands for naturalness, oneness, and trust. When it falls, it hardly breaks.

Okpu Egwurugwu

This cap depicts completeness. No Ọkọnkọ member attends an occasion without it. During conflict managements, land inspections, funeral services, it is the unique thing that marks an Ọkọnkọ man out.

Nzụ (white chalk)

Though *nzụ* is relatively alien to Ọkọnkọ Society, it is a common symbolism for peace. A visitor picks it from his host's table and uses it to make a mark on himself. The sign made and the chalk itself speaks one thing: 'I came for peace and with peace.' The chalk or *nzụ* is a unique language of peace.

Abuba Ugo (Eagle's feather)

The Igbo culture sees the eagle as a unique bird, the king of all birds. *Abuba ugo* is a synecdoche being seen as the whole or entirety of the eagle. Sticking *abuba ugo* in one's cap creates the imagery of honour, greatness, integrity, and attainment to the apex.

Ọji Igbọ (Igbo kola nut)

Ọji Igbọ is like a covenant. *Ọji Igbọ* is the centre of Igbo culture. Kola generally in Igbo culture is held in high esteem, and it is believed that it understands the Igbo language alone. *Ọji Igbọ*, in particular, is the Igbo culture. It is used for traditional marriages, sacrifices and ọfọ practice. One can break ordinary kola with a knife. This is not so for *Ọji Igbọ*. It is broken with the bare hands, and it could comprise four, six or more parts or lobes (*ibé*). The more the lobes, a piece of Igbo kola nut has, the better the symbolism it represents for a given occasion.

Uha Tree

Many homes have uha tree. Some merely see it as a mere tree that produces the uha leaf which is used in cooking ofe uha (uha soup). Beyond this is the fact that the uha tree has a spiritual significance. The tree hardly dies. After years, it leaves wither, and it reproduces again. The tree of uha is also seen in shrines. It symbolises long life.

Ekpete (drum)

In Ọkọnkọ in particular, the six drums are voices. They have different voices. They speak one language. They communicate with themselves. They produce a rhythm that moves people to dance. They produce a rhythm that pushes the masquerades to act and entertain. *Ekpete,* small or big, is a symbol for music. They entertain.

Atang (a big bell)

The *atang* has a certain spiritual significance. It can be seen as the forerunner as the bearer swings it back and forth while walking. Its clinging sound announces that the masquerades will soon be coming out. The traditional bard or poet swinging it with excitement speaks in proverbs, praising and apostrophising the ancestors. Using the modern language, the *atang* can be seen as the pilot, the siren.

Nkpara

The *nkpara* are sticks used in demarcating the boundaries of one farmland from the other. They are both symbols and signs. Whoever adjusts them is seen as a criminal. Touching the *nkpara* to falsify the boundary can cause death. The *nkpara* are seen as sacred because they are collectively created. *Nkpara* can also be seen as symbolising a covenant. They can only be shifted collectively by the *umu nna* or Ọkọnkọ.

Masquerades

In Igbo culture, the masquerades are symbolisms and intermediaries between the living and the ancestors. The disguise is symbolic of the spirits of the dead. In Ọkọnkọ society, the members have a special language which they use in greeting the masquerades.

Ji (Yam)

Yam is a prominent symbol in the Igbo culture and tradition. It is not seen as mere food but a culture. In many Igbo communities, New Yam Festival is celebrated yearly to celebrate the harvesting of yam. There is even a title *'Eze ji'* (king of yam) for some people who wish to

identify with the world of yam. In Ọkọnkọ, their *Ọkwụkwụ* main food is yam pepper soup, *miri ọkụ ji.*

When a woman's dowry is paid and food eaten by the two parties, the father of the new bride presents a big yam to his daughter to carry it as a baby. What this implies is that yam symbolises fertility. The new bride cooks the food when she gets to her husband's home. Eating yam facilitates fertility.

Gunshots/Cannon

The booming of gun cannons, *ntu ala* and the flames they produce mean a lot. The booming of the gun or cannon in itself is a message that an important thing has begun or concluded. The flames or smokes stand for power that consumes. During *Ọkwụkwụ* (funeral service), the *ntu ala* is filled with some dry leaves and sand and buried in the ground. Gun powders are spread to each of the *ntu ala,* and they boom noisily when a fire is placed on the gun powder which moves to trigger the *ntu ala.*

Mmanyi ngwo (Palm wine)

Palm wine is synonymous with the Igbo culture. Some parts of Igbo also use *mmanyi nkwu* (palm tree wine). The latter is very expensive and not as popular and significant as *mmanyi ngwo,* the palm wine proper. Palm wine symbolises happiness. People drink it and merry. Again, palm wine is an instrument through which ancestors are consulted. It is used in libations.

Crossing of legs

The crossing of legs is seen as a mark of insult in Ọkọnkọ gatherings. In conflict management sessions involving Ọkọnkọ members or panelists, Ọkọnkọ frowns at leg crossing. Whoever crosses his leg is cautioned or fined. They see it as a sign that depicts the act of disrespect, intimidation, and arrogance.

Standing akimbo

Elders can stand akimbo before their children. It depicts affluence, authority, and self-confidence. However, a child standing akimbo before his parents or elders is despised. Such posture is a sign of being rude, being proud, and being insensitive. Standing akimbo is, therefore, a type of horizontal communication (elders with elders) and vertical (superior with a junior).

Supporting the jaw with hand

This posture depicts despondency, confusion, and a sign of loss. This posture attracts people to begin to ask questions whether one has suffered some misfortune. It, therefore, translates to sorrowfulness, hopelessness, regret, despondency, and loss.

Holding the head with one's two hands

This posture depicts hopelessness. It is akin to supporting the jaw with hand. In the preceding, we have discussed both physical and mental symbolisms in the Igbo cultural worldview intending to underline the fact that the Igbo have peculiar semiotics that are unique to them and which aid in defining their spiritual, social, political, and even economic ways of life. Semiotics is one of the three theoretical frameworks of the study outlined in the literature has, as in the twenty analysed examples above, conformed with the definitions and analyses of renown semioticians that include: Aristotle, St Augustine and John Locke were among early exponents of semiotics (Sebeok 2001:4).

The Igbo signs and symbols and their representations in the cultural perspective of the people go a long way to justify what was studied in the literature that 'Semioticians only agree on one thing – signs and their meaning. They are like philosophers. Philosophers believe in knowledge but understand knowledge from various perspectives. For semioticians, they see signs and their meaning from scientific, cultural, linguistic, medical, biological and even zoological angle of which Thomas Sebeok (1920 – 2001) is known for.' In our situation, the Igbo cum Ọkọnkọ signs and symbols are cultural and linguistically based. One imagines how a palm frond becomes a source of authority for the Ọkọnkọ. When one imagines how a local cup, *oba*, stands for oneness and trust, one then begins to understand how Igbo kola nut is seen as a covenant without which no event in Igbo society can begin. In the same vein, the *uha* tree, the *nkpara* (the stick for demarcating borders), the masquerades, the yam tuber, the sound of gunshots and cannon, and of course, the palm wine all have a unique meaning based on Igbo semiotic cultural interpretations to conform with their worldview socially and spiritually.

No other cultures may view the symbols in the same manner as the Igbo. This supports De Moretin's (2011:148) position that interpretation or the act of interpreting is an operation which involves observation. Observation in the sense that a culture would have socially and spiritually observed certain signs and symbols as in the Igbo ones discussed above before coming up with what meanings they portray semiotically. This position justifies another literature on the difference between signs and interpretation where Danesi (2004:16) posits that 'the brain's capacity to produce and understand signs is called

semiosis, while the knowledge-making activity that capacity allows all human beings to carry out is known as representation.'

The studied semiotics generated in this study, twenty of them, have shown that the cultural and linguistic views of the Igbo are meant for the unique meaning of themselves and their environment, socially, politically, and spiritually. In other words, a symbol may have a dual meaning depending on the angle from which it is being viewed. For instance, the *uha* tree is physically a tree that produces the leave used in preparing *uha* soup. However, the spiritual angle of what uha tree stands for takes a complete interpretation and representation – longevity or life itself, hence it is found in shrines where spiritual deliberations are discussed.

Some Proverbs of Ọkọnkọ in Policing the Land

The following ten proverbs are part of the 30 generated from the fieldwork in 2015. No attempts are being made to give a full hermeneutical interpretation of them. However, their translations go a long way in giving their potency and relevance in maintaining peace in the land.

Anwuta si na oka nma ina ata ahu na abuo.
(The mosquito said it is better to bite in twos)

Nwoko anaghi ano na ulo, nwanyi avoo ishi.
(A man cannot be at home and leave a woman to unearth a buried charm).

Anwuta si na oka nma ina ata ahu naahu
(The mosquito said it is better to bite in twos).
The proverb encourages brainstorming, and collective consultations as such would lead to uniformity of purpose.

Egbe beru, ugo beru, nke si ibe ye eberu, nku kwaya.
(Let the hawk and the eagle perch, may the wings of whichever of them that prevents the other from perching break).

Onye ozi anaghi atu ilu
(A messenger does not speak in proverbs).

Ogu anaghi, avo anu
(The hoe cannot dissect a dead animal).

Ndi nwe ala, ne eji ala
(Those that own the land control the land)

Nkpisi nnwe eze, ma eze ya
(A toothpick knows the teeth that fit it).

Onye ajuju anaghi efu uzo
(He that asks questions does not miss the way).

Nte otu ukwu ne site na otutu na aatu onu
(A one-legged cricket begins to make earlier move to make its hole for inhabitant).

Akporobaro and Emovon (1994:165) emphasise that the Igbo language is replete with proverbs. This is very true, and it must be added that a good number of Igbo proverbs are meant for community policing.

Conclusion:

Ọkọnkọ Society serves as an appellate court when conflict management fails at *ama ala* (kinship) level. That is to say, that Ọkọnkọ also polices the very much respected *ama ala* system. The people of Umuahia respect the Ọkọnkọ Society and trust its interventions and judgments. Ọkọnkọ serves as a cultural enforcement mechanism against community crises. Because of its cultural authority, Ọkọnkọ can check crimes in the society and disciplines persons of questionable conduct. Ọkọnkọ is not consulted in murder cases as that is usually left to the police. During Ọkọnkọ's rites at market squares, Igbo language and cultural symbols are used. Women, children, and uninitiated men are allowed to observe and be entertained by the masquerades. The *ọmụ* (palm frond) and *uhie* (drum) are the emblems and language of Ọkọnkọ Society. The *ọmụ* symbolises authority, while *uhie* represents the society's symbol of communication. Proverbs are used by Ọkọnkọ Society to express complex messages during conflict mediation and to give a final verdict after investigations of judicial proceedings. Proverbs thus serve as tools for conflict management, peace-building and crime control. Ọkọnkọ Society successfully manages social conflicts among the people of Umuahia using linguistic and cultural strategies. The government can learn from Ọkọnkọ Society's effective conflict management strategies.

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UNMASKING LANGUAGE AS A DETERMINANT OF BORDER SECURITY FOR NIGERIA AND BENIN

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Abstract

This paper takes a critical look at the inherent role language plays in border security of Nigeria and Benin. Language is a vital component of the culture of a people. It is a factor of communication and influences the way a people relate with outsiders or non-native language speakers. Extant literature on border security has focused on more salient causes of border insecurity such as corruption, weak capacity of border officials and funding. This paper argues that the inability of border security officials to grasp the respective official languages of the neighbouring state, as well as the local languages of the border communities, pose existential challenges to the policing of their borders. These include inadequate proficient multilingual border officials, poor knowledge of the peculiarities of the local languages and cultures, insufficient cross-border agency collaboration and adversarial mentality dating back to different colonial orientation. The author proposes the following counter-measures, such as the insistence on multilingualism as the criterion for the recruitment of border officials, and the official adoption of indigenous languages at border towns. Mainstreaming of border indigenes into border security agencies, organisation of joint cross-border forums for collaboration, increased awareness, and research into judicious use of local languages at the borders by research institutes of both states and development of joint capacity-building programs for border officials on both sides of the divide.

Key words: Language, multilingualism, border security, French, English

Introduction

> Language is a major setback to our efforts to secure the border. The fact that we cannot understand each other's respective official language does not allow us to cooperate with Benin officials as much as we would love to (Interview with Nigerian Customs Officer, Imeko town, 27/11/2018)

Language is the mode of communication of a people and constitutes a major part of their culture (Ayamga, 2014). It serves as a form of identity for the speakers. Language is also a determinant of inclusion and exclusion of a group of people, uniting an in-group over the out-group, thereby leading to association and dissociation (Mahadi & Jafari, 2012). Language plays a crucial role in border security (Betek, Fayomi & Agboola, 2018). It is the vehicle through which thoughts and ideas are passed across. Border security is a delicate process by which threats to the state are kept at bay while non-threats are permitted to come into the country (Lamptey, 2013). At the heart of this threat detection regularly playing out at the border is communication. Wrong communication has the potential to lead to misidentification of threats and endanger the securitisation process (Folarin, Folarin & Olorunyomi, 2015). Border security requires clear communication between all stakeholders, including security officials, travellers, and border community indigenes. This is particularly crucial as a border is a piece of territory that straddles two jurisdictions, often with different administrative norms (Asiwaju, 2006).

West Africa is made up of 16 diverse states in the region. Despite the presence of thousands of ethnic groups divided between the artificial borders that constitute the states, there are only three major official languages in the area. These are English (5 Anglophone countries), French (9 Francophone states) and Portuguese (2) (Folarin et al., 2015). These three languages are the official modes of communication for the over 300 million citizens that populate West Africa (ICMPD & IOM, 2015) The official languages are those that are designated by the sovereign states to be used for communication, business, and trade. In West Africa, the official languages have been derived from the languages used in colonising a particular territory. (Betek et al., 2018). Although there are up to 1,500 indigenous languages spoken by ethnic groups in the region, only the three colonial languages are officially recognised (Folarin et al., 2015). The regional body of West Africa- The Economic Community of West African States drives the integration process of all its 15 member states (Aduloju, 2017). However, this process has met obstacles due to the politics engendered by language barriers (Folarin et al., 2015; Betek et al., 2018). French and English-speaking states have experienced tensions that have weakened the prospects of integration in the -region (Adeniran, 2012; Ayamga, 2014).

This paper critically examines language as a determinant of border security between Nigeria and Benin. Border security is the totality of efforts made by a state to manage

crossings over its borders to facilitate the movement of people and goods while keeping out threats or crime (Aning & Pokoo, 2017). Most literature on border security focus on funding and training of officials, inter-agency collaboration, corruption and transnational organised crime as factors affecting border security (Aning & Pokoo, 2017; Onuoha, 2013; Akhigbe, 2019; Esan, 2013; Aning & Pokoo, 2017). Scholars that identify language barriers are fixated on the official languages and the popular solution of bilingualism but fail to recognise the unique role of indigenous languages as a way out of the impasse (Folarin et al., 2015; Betek et al., 2018; Ayamga, 2014). The paper, however, argues that language is often overlooked as a factor that negates border security for both states. The fact that border officials are neither versed in the official languages of the neighbouring countries nor the indigenous languages of border towns leads to misunderstanding. It makes a mockery of the attempts of Nigeria and Benin to secure their borders. It is suggested that language presents an opportunity that stakeholders can take advantage of to create bridges rather than barriers. This would involve recourse to both the promotion of bilingualism among border security officials, as well as, the use of local languages of border communities for better understanding and cross-border relations.

The study adopts the qualitative methodology with the case study research design. This is due to the intention to undertake an in-depth study of the subject matter. The case study is the border town of Imeko in Ogun, South-Western Nigeria, that borders Benin. The primary sources of data include key informant interviews with the Administrative Manager at the African Regional Institute at Imeko, ECOWAS Free Movement and Migration Unit Programme Officer in Abuja as well as the Directeur-General of Agence Béninoise De Gestion Intégrée des Espaces Frontaliers (ABeGIEF) in Cotonou. In-depth interviews with border security officials and border community stakeholders including the Onimeko of Imeko, teachers and youth of Imeko town. The research was conducted in the English language, and the aid of a translator needed to translate into the English language, Ketu-Yoruba, and French, where necessary. The field research was carried out in November 2018 in Imeko border town of Ogun State, Nigeria, as part of a Master's thesis. The researcher used observation of the interaction between Nigeria border security officials and indigenes of Imeko as well as between Nigerian and Benin security officials and citizens during the one month. Supplementary data was also gotten from the active participation and observation of the researcher at the 51st Coronation of the Alaketu of Kétou on 27 July 2019. Secondary data from books and journal articles were sought and analysed to complement the primary data.

Border Security

The border is a security construct (Onuoha, 2013). The border is used by a state to exercise their ability to determine who is permissible to enter into their territory and who is not (Bauder, 2018). The border is an essential symbol of state sovereignty, and as a result, great care is taken to ensure that it is not breached (Foucher, 2019; Aning and Pokoo, 2017). The importance attached to border security is seen in African settings. African borders are artificial, in that they were created by colonialism without African consultation and did not take into cognisance the kinship ties and relations of ethnic groups on the ground (Asiwaju, 1990; Foucher, 2019; Bauder, 2018). Border towns in Africa are often neglected and underdeveloped due to their distant location from the capitals and poor governance (Scorgie-Porter, 2018; Ochefu & Kpoghul, 2010). Nevertheless, African border towns witness an overwhelming presence of various security officials amidst the absence of development indicators such as roads, schools, hospitals, and jobs (Scorgie-Porter, 2018). This shows the emphasis placed on border security rather than the development of border towns, particularly in Africa (Chukwuma, 2006).

Border security is carried out by several government security agencies but primarily include the customs to regulate the entry and exit of goods and services and immigration to control the movement of people (Akinnowo & Okoronkwo, 2013; Esan, 2013). Borders have historically been considered as barriers to keep out threats to the state while giving access to non-threats. Increased interactions in this age of globalisation with the attendant technology have led to the new conception of borders as bridges rather than barriers (African Union Commission, 2013; Longo, 2016). This new perspective considers borders to connect states in other to attain mutual objectives rather than obstacles that keep states from cooperating (African Union Commission, 2013). As bridges, countries increasingly depend on their neighbours to ensure joint-border policing that maximises security efforts of both states through sharing of intelligence, creation of joint border posts (JBP) and capacity building (Longo, 2016). It is within this recent conception of border security that this paper examines how language plays a role in the efforts of Nigeria and Benin to secure their border. Communication is vital in ensuring both states secure the border as a bridge between them rather than a barrier.

Nigeria and Benin Borders

Nigeria is the most populous state in West Africa and shares land borders with four countries- 1,690 kilometres with Cameroon in the east, 1,497 kilometres with Niger in the north, 773 kilometres with Benin in the west and 87 kilometres with Chad in the northeast (Onuoha, 2013). The land borders are very diverse and are located in rugged, often

inaccessible locations such as mountains or jungles. A common characteristic of the state's borders is its porosity. Nigeria's then Minister of Interior, Abba Moro admitted that there were over 1,499 illegal border routes and just 84 right ones into Nigeria (Onuoha, 2013).

The current border between Nigeria and Benin is based on the colonial border set between the British and French territories in 1889 (Blum, 2014). The lack of natural boundaries between both states makes it hard to determine the exact demarcation of the regions (Blum, 2014). Both countries have similar ethnic groups that exist along its borders, such as the Yoruba and Hausa (Babatunde, 2014). West African borders divided people of the same ethnic groups in various states. They speak the same languages and share cultures and festivals (Ibeanu, 2006).

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing the borders with Benin

Source: Cartography Department, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ibadan (2018)

Language and Borders in Imeko

The field research was carried out in Imeko, a town located in Imeko-Afon local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria that borders Benin. Imeko is a predominantly a Ketu-Yoruba speaking town (Asiwaju, 2006; 2017). This dialect is shared with other Ketu-speaking communities including Owode, Ilara and Idofa on the Nigerian side of the border. As well as

across the border in Benin, including Kétou, Dinrin, Ilikimu and Ofia (Asiwaju, 2017). The artificial boundaries that now exist between Nigeria and Benin divide the territory of the ancient Ketu kingdom between both states, including families, farmlands, and houses. This resulted from the 1889 Anglo-French treaty that set the border between both countries (Blum, 2014; Asiwaju, 2017).

Despite this separation across the colonially-imposed borders, both towns continue to have close relations united by their language, culture, marriage and business ties. The traditional leader of Imeko town, the Onimeko of Imeko affirmed in an interview that,

> The borders do not divide us here. Most people in Imeko have extensions of their families across the border in Kétou, including myself. We speak the same language and celebrate the same festivals together. (Interview with Onimeko, Imeko town, 28/11/2018)

This affirmation corresponds with the views of the Alaketu of Kétou in Benin, the twin town of Imeko in 1956 who noted that "We regard the border to divide the British and the French and not the Yoruba." (Asiwaju, 1984:6). The Ketu-Yoruba language serves to remind the people of Imeko in Nigeria and Kétou in Benin of their shared heritage and values (Asiwaju, 2017). It is used to forge closer bonds that transcend their differences in various administrative and official systems (Folarin et al., 2015). It is also a means for the traditional rulers of both towns- the Onimeko of Imeko and the Alaketu of Kétou to work together to resolve challenges in their domain. The Onimeko confirmed this synergy,

> The Alaketu and I work together to resolve several issues in our towns. For instance, if someone commits a crime in Imeko and runs across the border to Kétou in Benin, I simply contact the Alaketu to summon the person to his palace. The criminal is then arrested and brought over to Nigeria to face justice. (Interview with Onimeko, Imeko town, 28/11/2018)

Such an approach helps the border security officials across the border sidestep the thorny issue of sovereignty and reduce bureaucratic delays in checkmating crime. A police officer explained that,

> Whenever a criminal crosses the border from Imeko into Kétou, it is difficult to apprehend the person. We need to report the case to the Abeokuta [state] command who then send the request to the Abuja [national] office. The Abuja headquarters now have to contact Cotonou for help in catching the criminal. Instead of this long process, we simply ask the traditional rulers of Imeko and Kétou for their support. (Interview with Police Officer, Imeko town, 29/11/2018)

The field research revealed that the border security officials on both sides of the border of Nigeria and Benin had difficulties interacting in the official languages of the neighbouring country. This issue of the language barrier has been well documented. Ayamga (2014) notes that this prevented English-speaking Ghanaian border officials from working well with French-speaking Burkinabe border security officials. Folarin et al. (2015) argue that the language barrier goes beyond the administrative level at the borders to even top government officials who are not linguistically proficient in other official languages. The border is the first line of defence of a country (Onuoha, 2013). The inability of border officials to comprehend the official language of the neighbouring country leads to misunderstandings at the borders between officials and commuters and prolongs border crossing making them torturous experiences (Folarin et al., 2015). The Director-General of ABeGIEF, a foremost coordinating border security agency in Benin explained that,

> We have the issue of a language barrier with Nigeria. Most Nigerian border officials cannot speak French while some of our men cannot speak English, so it is not very easy to work together. The issue is different in our border with Togo, where we speak French and understand ourselves better. (Interview with DG ABeGIEF, Cotonou, 15/11/2018)

Likewise, a Nigerian customs security official at Imeko border lamented that there were no personnel proficient in the French language that could facilitate the border security measures. (Interview with Customs Officer, Imeko, 27/11/2018). This fact was also expressed by an ECOWAS official who noted that.

> Language remains the primary means of communication. A language barrier thus presupposes that there can be no communication. Without proper notification, intelligence gathering and community policing will be nearly impossible. Despite the high rate of migration which characterises the ECOWAS region, language barriers which impede governments and states have not given the cross-border movements of persons much attention. Language barrier acts as a clog in the wheel to the fight against transnational crimes. (Interview with ECOWAS Free Movement and Migration Programme Officer, Abuja, 10/10/2018)

How does Language affect Border Security?

English and French are the official lingua franca of Nigeria and Benin respectively. These languages are used widely for communication and documentation purposes within these states. There are, however, hundreds of local dialects spoken by the millions of citizens. The language barrier ensues because the neighbouring countries speak different official languages and their border security officials are not proficient in the use of the language of

the neighbouring country across the border (Betek et al., 2018). This was observed by the researcher on the way to the venue of the 51st coronation of the Alaketu of Kétou on 27 July 2019 from Imeko in Nigeria. Benin border security officials were unable to communicate in English with the researcher and his native Imeko guide. It was only after the Imeko native guide spoke in the indigenous Ketu-Yoruba dialect to Kétou indigenes to translate for the official at the border that the border official permitted the researcher to pass through the borders to attend the ceremony. French-speaking Benin has this issue with the Nigerian borders where English is spoken but does not experience it at the borders it shares with French-speaking Togo (Akhigbe, 2019). Language constraints are also visible at the Ghana-Burkina Faso borders where the former speaks English while the latter speaks French (Ayamga, 2014)

Language has the following effects on border security.

First, few border security officials are proficient in the respective official languages of the neighbouring state. One reason for this is the lack of emphasis on language skills in recruitment efforts of border agencies, especially on the Nigerian side, unlike global best practices. Typical recruitment notice of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), one of the most prominent border agencies only specifies physical qualities such as height, body measurements such as chest and hips and ignores the linguistic skills such as knowledge of French language required to work alongside Benin border security officials (Nigeria Immigration Service, 2017). Contrary to this practice, recruitment into the European external border agency, otherwise known as FRONTEX, instead focuses on soft skills, including multilingual abilities (FRONTEX, 2017).

This relegation of crucial linguistic skills to the background contributes to the recruitment of Nigerian border security officials who are unequipped with the linguistic skills to carry out their duties (Aduloju, 2017) effectively. The border security officials are neither proficient in the official languages of their counterparts across the divide, nor do they comprehend the local languages of the border communities (Chukwuma, 2006). The border security officials themselves revealed this much in-field interviews with the Nigerian custom and immigration officers at Imeko and the Benin Director-General of ABeGIEF, the border security coordinating agency at Cotonou. Observation from the field revealed that Nigerian border officials at the Imeko border were not able to interact in French with the border crossers from Benin. They had to resort to using signs and relying on local indigenes from Imeko to use the common local language of Ketu-Yoruba to translate for the officials.

Secondly, the lack of proficiency in language creates room for exploitation of border community citizens and border users (Folarin et al., 2015; Betek et al., 2018). The inability

to easily communicate with the border user leads to hostility and frequent misunderstandings between the border officials and travellers with resultant subsequent extortion (Ibeanu, 2006, Ayamga 2014; Akhigbe, 2019) Thus; border users are often harassed for bribes at multiple illegal checkpoints with their rights under the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons routinely trampled upon (Ibeanu, 2006; Betek et al., 2018). The researcher observed at the Imeko border that several Beninois citizens were unable to communicate with the Nigerian security officials and were left stranded at the borders as a result.

Thirdly, data from the field showed that poor knowledge of the peculiarities of French and English languages by the border officials cause more harm than good to border security. An immigration officer acknowledged that as the Nigerian border officials could not speak French, they could be misinterpreted to be hostile by the Benin border crossers. This breakdown in communication leads to significant challenges in determining the purpose of a traveller crossing into Nigeria (Interview with Immigration Officer, 29/11/2018). This tendency for misunderstanding is well documented in the literature. Ayamga (2014) confirms that miscommunication breeds disagreement between the officials and border crossers. Folarin et al. (2015) also affirm that hostility at the borders is a common effect of the language barriers of border security officials.

Asiwaju (2006) notes that the different political systems also contribute to issues concerning the security of the borders. Whereas Nigeria operates a federal system of government with regions as subordinates with semi-autonomous powers, Benin utilises a centralised system of government where all aspects of governance are controlled from the centre (Asiwaju 2006). This difference in political systems further complicates the structure of border agencies leading to frequent misunderstandings. This is exacerbated by the inability of the free flow of communication in the preferred languages. This hostility escalates further and often results in lawful border users being denied the right of entry into the respective states (Ayamga, 2014). A Police officer at the Imeko border lamented that the absence of French-speaking Nigerian police officers hindered the smooth performance of their duties of maintaining law and order in Imeko border town. A teacher in Imeko explained that the border security officials were fond of securitising people from Kétou in Benin as smugglers due to their inability to communicate in English (Interviews with Police Officer and School Teacher, Imeko town, 28/11/2018).

Furthermore, deficient language skills contribute to inadequate cross-border collaboration between Nigeria and Benin (Folarin et al., 2015). States that share so much in common, especially at the border such as language, religion and even traditional institutions

should often meet to iron out differences and settle challenges (Chukwuma, 2006). The emphasis should be on seeking ways of collaboration for mutual benefit (Asiwaju, 2006). This is important as traditional institutions are similar across the border and are best primed to help the security officials secure their territories (Lamptey, 2013). The 51st coronation of the Alaketu of Kétou provided the researcher with first-hand information of the unity of the Imeko and Kétou traditional institutions and collaboration between the peoples on both sides of the border. It was revealed that the line of succession to the throne was open to royal families of both Kétou in Benin and Imeko in Nigeria even though they were in two different states separated by the border. After the selection of the Alaketu from a Kétou ruling family, the Imeko delegation from Nigeria played their role in the planning and execution of the coronation ceremonies. The language of the service was entirely Ketu-Yoruba with few French translations. Asiwaju (2006) recognises that Nigeria and Benin have worked together on cross-border policing. One of the first transnational workshops was the Nigeria-Benin Trans-border Cooperation workshop in 1988 (Asiwaju 2006). Several studios were then held most recently in 2006 at the Africa Regional Institute at Imeko (Chukwuma, 2006). The workshop was conducted in English with translations in Ketu-Yoruba and French. However, there has been minimal follow-up on the resolutions of the seminars since then with language becoming even more of a barrier towards working together.

Besides, the differences in official languages have contributed to the adversarial mentality that is symptomatic of relations between Anglophone and Francophone states in the region (Adeniran, 2012). This has led to the battle for supremacy within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the regional international organisation (Adeniran,2012; Folarin et al., 20158; Betek et al., 2018). Folarin et al. (2015:1) note that language barriers have transformed West Africans from "pre-colonial kinsmen to post-colonial strangers." The quest for regional integration has been overshadowed by claims of interference in the affairs of francophone states by France through its overwhelming military, commercial and cultural influence (Onuoha, 2013; Lamptey, 2013). This is not the case with the Anglophone states that are comparatively independent of British influences (Ayamga, 2014). The researcher observed that the Benin security officials at the Imeko border were quite hostile in their interactions with English-speaking Nigerians who could not express themselves in French. This hostility however quickly dissipated whenever the border crosser communicated in Ketu-Yoruba, the local language of the border towns of Imeko and Kétou.

Indigenous Languages and Border Security

Culture is similar on both sides of the Nigeria-Benin borders. Bauder (2018) attributes this peculiarity of African borders to the ignorance of European colonisers who disregarded the "geographical extent of linguistic, religious and ethnic communities when they drew borders to delineate the territories. Sometimes they split communities; other times amalgamated communities into single state territory." (Bauder, 2018:22). The paramount ruler of Imeko describes the reality thus,

> This artificial boundary divided people of the same language, culture, origin, and the same social activities. I have my family compound in Imeko in Nigeria and also in Benin. It has been there from time immemorial. When I go into parts of Benin and cannot converse in French, I just speak the local Ogu language, and I receive a rousing welcome from the border officials. (Interview with Onimeko, Imeko town, 28/11/ 2018)

The Administrative Manager at the Africa Regional Institute, Imeko states that,

> We have frequent festivals. Whenever we want to celebrate our festivals like the Oro festival, our relatives from across the border in Kétou and Ilikimu in Benin join us and celebrate together. (Interview with Administrative Manager, Imeko town 28/11/2018)

This reality was entirely on display at the 51st Coronation of the Alaketu of Kétou on 27 July 2019. The people of Imeko and Kétou came together as one to celebrate their unique culture and tradition that had been upheld from pre-colonial times. There was nothing that identified any participant in the ceremony as from one country or the other as they partook in the same festivities, prayers and celebrated the new king whose Kétou kingdom is split between two countries with a large part of it in Nigeria. This observation by the researcher buttresses Folarin et al. (2015) observation that the people separated at West African border towns is still as united as before through their language and culture. Meanwhile, Chukwuma (2006) notes that most border security officials posted to border towns are merely unaware of the peculiarities of the culture and nature of the people and how to harness them for better security of the border properly. This is in line with the submission of a teacher at Imeko who noted that,

> Most border security officials posted to the border do not understand the local languages. If the government has to post officials there, it should be those who understand the dialect of Imeko- Kétou. Imeko is in Nigeria while Kétou is in Benin. This is important to create a good rapport. For instance, if

> something happens at the border, how do they want to communicate with the border officials on the other side when the Nigerian officials do not speak French? (Interview with Teacher, Imeko town, 29/11/ 2018)

One way to take advantage of the language similarities is to use the indigenous languages of border communities in border security of both states. Many border indigenes are not proficient in the official languages (Interview with Administrative Manager of African Regional Centre, Imeko town, 27/11/ 2018). This is particularly the case on the Nigerian side of the border where formal education is poorly handled as schools are often dilapidated with poor quality teachers that are not well remunerated (Asiwaju, 2018; 2017; Akhigbe, 2019). Consequently, the researcher observed during the field research at Imeko that there is a form of apathy towards the use of official languages by border community indigenes.

The Administrative Manager of the African Regional Centre at Imeko noted further that,

> Many of us, the border indigenes, do not speak English at all. We are not interested because we have nothing to do with it. What we are concerned about is the Ketu dialect. (Interview with Administrative Manager of the Africa Regional Centre, Imeko town, 28/11/ 2018)

The Administrative Manager further notes that:

> The local dialects are used during traditional meetings. With meetings between the traditional leaders and border security officials, a lot of time is wasted in translation. If the officials have a good grasp of the languages, they can hold the meetings themselves without the need for civilians. (Interview with Administrative Manager of the Africa Regional Centre, Imeko town, 28/11/ 2018)

The researcher observed that the translation in such meetings with the border security officials is carried out by the youth of the Imeko border town There is however the risk of misinterpretation in the course of translating information between the communicating parties. Language is a marker of the diversity of cultures. It connotes the robust nature of humanity. The fact that there are several languages at various state borders should be celebrated rather than considered as a barrier (Interview with ECOWAS Free Movement and Migration Unit Official, Abuja, 10/10/2018). The multiple languages at the borders are an opportunity for dialogue rather than conflict. Nigeria and Benin should harness this rich diversity for the benefit of border security.

An Imeko chief contends that:

> The problem is with the colonial languages, not the indigenous ones! The indigenous languages bring us together. The Imeko people speak Ketu-Yoruba dialect fluently. (Interview with Administrative Manager of Africa Regional Institute, Imeko town, 27/11/2018)

This corresponds with Folarin et al. (2015) conclusion that the indigenous languages are not to blame for the administrative and political divide in West Africa but the colonial ones.

Border operatives on both sides of the border should take advantage of the local language to complement the conventional ones at the boundaries. There is a lot more cooperation recorded when one is spoken to in one's native language rather than an official one (Interview with Teacher, Imeko town,27/11/2018). It elicits a natural desire to connect and be as helpful as possible. As language is a marker of the culture of a people, it is a sign of respect when the indigenous language is utilised (Interview with Youth Leader, Imeko town 29/11/2018). Indigenous languages of border towns should be effectively used to gain the cooperation and trust of indigenes of border towns in carrying out border security (Lamptey, 2013). This is important as the policing of these borders cannot be done in isolation, but with close interaction and cooperation with the border communities (Ayamga,2014).

The researcher observed that the use of indigenous languages of border communities by Nigerian and Benin border agencies could help improve intelligence gathering develop joint strategies and involve the local population in the security of their region which happens to be the borders. This has been buttressed in various studies (Asiwaju, 2006; Chukwuma, 2006; Akhigbe, 2019). It, however, contradicts the assertion of other scholars that consider bilingualism to be the only solution such as Park (2006), Betek et al. (2018) and Ayamga (2014)

The dependence on the use of solely the official languages at the borders of both states also endangers the survival of the indigenous languages. The boundaries witness massive traffic of people, goods, and services all year round (Folarin et al., 2015). The insistence on just the use of official languages could wither down the vitality of the local languages of border communities. This could lead to their eventual extinction (Babatunde, 2014) and erosion of the substantial part of the culture of border towns.

Improved communication at the borders is essential to enhance border-crossing procedures. The inability of security officials to communicate effectively in the neighbouring official language increases waiting times at the boundaries. A study conducted at the Seme border between Nigeria and Benin found that the Nigeria Customs had very few personnel who could speak and translate French, the official language of Benin which delayed the

clearance times of inbound goods from Benin (Akhigbe, 2019). This is in line with Ayamga (2014) who observed in his study of Ghana-Burkina Faso borders that the inability of border officials to understand the neighbouring language led to the loss of vital time in interpretation and even manipulation of the information. The delay due to language difficulties was experienced by the researcher on his way to the 51st Coronation of the Alaketu of Kétou at the Imeko border and also observed at the border posts during this research.

Recommendations

There are several ways in which both states could take advantage of language to improve the security of their borders.

First is an insistence on bilingualism in the official language of the neighbouring state as a criterion for border security personnel recruitment. The inability of border officials to converse in the official language of the neighbouring country is a drawback to their success in securing the border (Ayamga, 2014; Folarin et al., 2015). There should also be recourse to studying local languages of the border communities to prevent impasses at the borders. The Africa Regional Institute at Imeko in Nigeria is a border research institution that could be used by the Nigerian government to train border security officials in Ketu-Yoruba, the dialect of both Imeko in Nigeria and Kétou in Benin. As the Imeko traditional ruler advocates:

> The government should site a tertiary institution at the border that can cater to language learning both the official language of Benin and local languages. Border officials could be trained at the schools to learn the language (Interview with Onimeko, Imeko town, 29/11/2018).

Equipped with the knowledge of these languages, the border officials could facilitate easy navigation of the borders for the border users. Knowledge of the local languages also breeds cordial relations between the border officials and the border communities. The Administrative Manager at Imeko states further:

> When the border officials can speak our languages, it brings us closer to them so we can reveal vital information and intelligence they could use. By speaking our language, they become one of us, and we would always want them to succeed (Interview with Administrative Manager of Africa Regional Centre, Imeko, 28/11/2018)

Besides, border community indigenes should be mainstreamed into the border security architecture. This approach is only rational as the youth of border areas are the most conversant with the topography, prevalent crime networks and realities of life at the border

(Lamptey, 2013; Akhigbe, 2019). The ability of border indigenes to communicate effectively in their native language which is often shared with the neighbouring border town in Benin is also crucial to the success of their mission to secure the border and adjoining areas. Thus, mainstreaming border indigenes into the border security system could make for more significant achievements. Lamptey (2013) argues that the success of border security agencies would be better guaranteed when they include border communities in the security of their borders.

Moreover, there should be more inter-disciplinary forums for stakeholders in border security to suggest the way forward for both states. One such avenue is the new 16th Border Regions in Transition (BRIT) conference that held at Ibadan in Nigeria and Cotonou in Benin from 15 October to 18th 2018. This conference provided an avenue for scholars, border security officials, border communities' leaders, policymakers and civil society organisations of both Nigeria and Benin along with several other international stakeholders to share ideas on North-South Dialogue on Border Management. It was held in both English and French with simultaneous translations for participants. Such avenues highlight veritable means of providing innovative research on resolving the issues that plague West African borders. The fact that the conference held for two days in Nigeria before the participants then travelled through the limit for the concluding part of the meeting in Benin served to reinforce mutual understanding of the realities of the borders for both states. Cross-border forums such as this help create avenues for Nigeria and Benin to work out the issues concerning their borders, including language.

Finally, there should be increased research on how language matters in border security by research institutes of both states. For instance, formal research collaborations could be created between the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS) of the University of Ibadan and the Centre for Population Studies (CEFORP) of the Université d'Abomey-Calavi that hosted the BRIT 2018 conference. The research can take various forms, including the role language plays in the customs of the people and how it serves as a bridge between the communities on both sides of the border. Further research has to be carried out on ways in which the languages could be harnessed to celebrate the cultural diversity of the border areas. Likewise, exchange programs should be encouraged between students and professionals of both states to create a deeper understanding and appreciation for the culture of each other. This form of regular interchange would guard against unnecessary misunderstandings that prevent adequate security and development of border areas.

Conclusion

Language is an essential dynamic of Nigeria and Benin that should not constitute the barrier it poses at the moment to the security of the mutual borders. The indigenous languages at the border points can be used to facilitate greater understanding and cooperation between the border security agencies and communities of both states. The relegation of the importance of language in the scheme of things has continued to undermine the capacity of Nigeria and Benin to secure their borders successfully.

The focus should be placed on the multilingualism of border citizens and border officials, mainstreaming of border citizens into the border security architecture, and regular cross-border forums and capacity-building for border stakeholders.

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AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT CRISES: THE TRIUMPH OF THE EARLY AFRICANS AND THE PARADOX AT PRESENT

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Abstract

Today, in the global index, Africa has gotten a disproportionate share among the world's most underdeveloped continents. As long as human development in all its ramifications is concerned, Africa is relatively relegated to the downside. In the contemporary times, Africa is often characterized by general poverty, consumed by incessant tribal and civil wars and conflicts, political instability, unemployment, ravaged by hunger or one form of epidemic disease or the other. It has been a constant recipient of foreign aid and its corresponding debt crisis. But ironically, Africa has played a significant role in the creation of contemporary 'wealth of nations' so to say and overall economic activities going on in the global arena. "From ancient times till now, the continent of Africa stands as possibly the wealthiest continent" Every African nation is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. As the cradle of civilization, not only humans but also specific languages, crops, political and cultural influences spread out from Africa. There was a period in Africa in which African societies interacted with one another and with others from across the Indian Ocean during which ideas were exchanged and items traded on. These types of interactions set the pace for international cooperation and trade and created enormous wealth. This paper argues that African origin has erroneously, been marked with underdevelopment. The paper aims to clarify development and how it relates to Africa to dispute the erroneous stereotypical assertion that Africa is originally Underdeveloped. Relevant and reliable sources would be consulted and treated fairly.

Key words: Third World, Africa, Development, Early Africans

Introduction

At a specific phase or period of its development, colonialism and colonialists felt an ever-increasing compulsion to investigate the various aspects of the life or lives of their subjects. Hence all kinds of disciplines and sub-disciplines from science to fiction, government and anthropology to tropical medicine were set up and utilized for purposes of investigation and dissemination of knowledge of the 'native' to enable colonial proconsuls to control, manipulate and exploit their subjects more firmly and ruthlessly. Ethnologists, political scientists and colonial historians and anthropologists, as it were, took up the bludgeon to establish for the 'first time' the written history of a primitive and barbarous people deprived of any civilization, in an astounding continent inhabited by tribal peoples at the infancy of humanity. Any serious study about the history of Africans at all started during the post-war era when Africans began to clamour for independence, or, at least when the quest for self-rule became widespread (Yandaki 2015:1).

Colonial apologists ensure that "African economic history often focuses on explanations of poverty and obscures other aspects such as the achievements of early African farmers, traders and states, including improvements in food security and episodes of economic growth". Hence, African Origin has erroneously, callously, and indelibly been marked with underdevelopment (Bradshaw 1993:14). In the beginning, it was not so. Africans, in their quests and struggles for independence, had to address the challenge of the colonialists that Africa was primitive and apolitical. Indeed, the battle for freedom was an old-round struggle, involving politicians, journalists, academics, and even ex-soldiers. It was in the said struggle that Africans found themselves digging the most ancient past of Africa, rediscovering it and presenting it in a glorious light (Yandaki 2015:4-5). The scholarship is a dynamic phenomenon. As such, with independence, Africa's quest for development remained under the searchlight of scholars. In looking at this, colonial experiences were not lost count of (Yandaki 2015:5).

The Concept of Development

For underdevelopment to be fully appreciated, it is imperative to understand what development is. In as much as underdevelopment is not a total absence of development, the two terms are directly the opposite of each other. The term "Development" has no universally accepted meaning. There is heterogeneity in the concept of development as it means different things to different individuals, peoples, professionals, societies etc. and it is equally taken as a separate thing in different situation and context. Thus "development is a many-sided process" and its evaluation, albeit painful, is determined by who and what is involved, the age or era in existence and the standard with which right or wrong is

measured. According to, J. Wyszynski, "development is a broad concept signifying progressive changes, involving resources, institutions and methods of production relations and social transformation in general" (Wyszynski 1982:4).

In any situation or condition, place and time, development occurs at different levels ranging from individual and personal and societal and group development. It can be seen as a process of change or transformation that affects individuals or societies economically, socially, politically or socio-culturally. At the level of the individual, development implies "increased skills, capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline responsibility and material well-being" (Rodney 1972:11). In the context of society or social group, development is the "increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship", which is an index of social development. For the capitalist or communist, development is essentially a socio-economic phenomenon.

Development is a universal undertaking with multiple dimensions – cultural, economic, political social etc. so it cannot be seen as a purely commercial affair. Therefore, the leading indicators of development are economic, political, and social development. And all these indicators influence one another. But "most time the term development is used in an economic perspective because the type of economy under scrutiny is an indication of other social features" (Bradshaw 1993:24).

"Economic development is the capacity for dealing with the environment, e.g., by understanding the laws of nature (science) and put that understanding to practice by devising tools (technology) and then use them to perform organized work (Hallett 1978:255)". It consists of continuous structural and qualitative transformation with the equitable distribution of goods and services. Economic development denotes growth and changes in quantitatively measurable magnitude such as the National income, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), per capita income and industrial output.

Meanwhile, in any situation or place, at any point in time, development no matter the complexity in its concept and perception, entails a definite increase or improvement. It is advancement in status quo. It occurs when there is organic growth or change. It includes "more food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, clothes for the naked etc., and it is thus clear that development has to do with a quest for better living conditions (Feund ND:35).

The quest for survival predisposed the human person to seek development, to make life easier and find pleasure in leisure. Growth is always occurring. It seems to have no limit. A stage of it begets another, little wonder then Walter Rodney rightly averts that, "it can be offered as a generalization that all phases of development are temporary or transient and are

destined sooner or later to give way to something else" (Rodney 1972:18). Man would always want to encounter positive changes irrespective of what has already been achieved. He keeps trying to make life satisfactory through the availability and exploration of natural resources.

Development concerning Pre-colonial African Societies

According to Walter Rodney, development as a concept is a universal phenomenon because the conditions leading to economic expansion are equally comprehensive. In other words, "every people have shown a capacity for independently increasing their ability to live a more satisfying life through exploiting the resources of nature. Every continent can point to a period of economic development" (Rodney 1972: 19), especially the continent of Africa, the first home of man.

Despite a stream of scientific, archaeological and historical evidence to the contrary, there has been a concept of African "historical underdevelopment in the minds of many of which the origin and perpetuation of this concept have been supported by the denial of a meaningful, intellectual, cultural and historical experience" of Africans in terms of development, which laid the very foundations of human development and civilizations, the very bedrock upon which every other culture was built (Ishmeal 2016: 13).

The interactions of human beings and tremendous environmental diversity is the essence of Africa's history as the world's oldest human habitat. The origin of human society was in stages. Ranging from wandering, (nomadic), hunting and gathering wild fruits to the domestication of animals and growing of food crops which in turn reduced the need to go about in search of food, brought about increase in food production, increase in population, and ushered in the stage of settlements. The man noticed other needs and necessities, which prompted inventions of various degrees. With the increase in population, there were forms of social organization beyond the immediate family. "Africans developed their languages and fashion, their political structures; they also displayed a genius for agriculture, technology, architecture, trade and metaphysics" (Harris 1987: 13).

Early Africans exhibited inherent traits of development through Agricultural processes, with settlements and vast amounts of lands and only minimal populations, they devised tools for work and organized their labour in a way suitable to them. This is an index of social development, directly from their mental process (Molefe 2007:22). Such events, as I said earlier, led to growth in population and permanent settlements. Communities that cultivated more crops were able to trade surplus crops with other communities that still

relied on hunting and gathering. Between 6000BC and 4000BC, agriculture spread south of Sahara.

"The Egyptians were indeed blacks and their contributions to the world – agriculture, science, the calendar, writing, etc., were all contributions of black people" (Enesi 1993:66). This suggests that Africans are not mentally inferior to other peoples of the world; instead, they were and still are the pacesetters of contemporary global development. Evidently "the Nile valley was primed to influence human history in Africa forever; an inheritance that included farming, fishing, and hunting, in a very fertile and productive part of the earth, was enough to propel civilization to greater heights" (Molefe 2007: 24). For example, the Nile River in Egypt was also a strategic economic magnet through agrarian methods. It flooded every year, and once it had receded, it left behind, silt, which made the soil very fertile. Farmers were able to grow large quantities of food. This is one of the keys to why civilization flourished there. It is a well-known fact that agriculture is one of the most driving forces of economic growth and development.

The ability of the Egyptians, like every other pre-colonial African society, to understand their environment and handle it; to devise tools and develop organized labour; to derive the satisfaction of their needs, showed that Africans were developmentally mobile. To respond to the scarcity of rainfall, they devised irrigation, which is still in use till today. They understood the fertile components of the silt from the Nile River and utilized it to the maximum; they invented agricultural tools like hoes and ploughs (Sani 2012: 59).

Indeed, Africans were speedily developing independently before their developmental strides were rudely infringed on by European colonialism and imperialism. "When critics generalize about 'tribal wars' in Africa, 'the inability of Africans to govern themselves', 'the excessive corruption' in African societies, the implications often are that Africans are unique in those regards,…to all these, there are multiple causations, much of which stems from an oppressed past, rooted in gross derogation that shaped perceptions of Africans and non-Africans alike" (J.D.Fage, 1969:110). Eventually, original Africa was and is still misrepresented with underdevelopment as well as with any other thing negative, thereby callously undermining the fascinating world of African development through the origin of human civilizations, the wealth of African indigenous ideas and ideals, African concepts and traditional outlooks, which have fundamentally and expansively contributed and still contributes to the entire humanity (Sani 2012: 27).

Trends of Development in Early African Societies

In terms of social formations and political structures, the first-ever national government erupted from the Egyptian dynasties. In 3100 BC the kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt were united into one kingdom by King Menes. This is considered one of the most significant events in Egyptian history. The unification of Egypt led to a central authority, which carried out building projects and regulated trade. Egypt became very wealthy. This central authority is thought to have been one of the first examples of a national government. Unification also marked the beginning of the first dynasty (a line of rulers from the same family) of Egypt. It is said that 30 dynasties ruled Egypt for around 3000 years. This "is the first instance of human beings organizing themselves into a nation, comprised of different ethnic and social communities, …the first nation on earth, created and developed out of values of African environment" (Anene 1986: 87).

In addition to that, they exhibited quality governance and political stability. There were a lot of inventions in Egypt which were to be copied by the rest of the world. Creativity as noble as writing started from this Egyptian dynasty. "It is believed that writing was invented around 3400BCE in Kemet (Egypt), about 300years before we see a cuneiform system of writing on clay tablets in Mesopotamia, today's Iraq". This gave rise to recording of historical events, communication between the king, priests and different communities and the introduction of literary and instructional writings. By implication, even formal education started in Africa (KS Fage 1996: 47).

There were social formations in other parts of Africa. A well-organized system of state formations in terms of Empires and kingdoms. "There was the Oyo Empire, Benin Kingdom, Kanem Bornu Empire, the Hausa states, the Sokoto Caliphate and the Autonomous Igbo Communities in a landmass presently known as Nigeria. There were also the Kingdoms of Tekrur and Ghana, the Mali Empire, the Kingdom of Meroe, the Songhai Empire, the Shona Bantu Empire, the great Kingdoms of Bunyoro" (Usman 1973: 69). All these great kingdoms and vast Empires were strategically maintained and developed via organized, social, political, economic, and cultural structures. These Empires and Kingdoms were inexistent long before England had assumed any importance, even long before her people had united into a nation and they lasted until the eleventh century. And during these times, "the huge disparities in material wealth characteristic of Western societies and highly productive of serious conflicts were almost nonexistent" (Akinjobin 1980: 86), if not wholly absent.

There was also an excellent state of Agricultural development in early African societies, which evolved from hunting and gathering for survival to the domestication of animals and

cultivation of food crops using crude implements. This was a result of sound intellectual prowess which gave them the idea "that one could plant today and harvest tomorrow. This process came about through learned behaviour…. they learned how to grow their food crops, tame their animals, build their shelter, and make their tools in response to the environment" (Oliver 1962: 78).

In the Nile valley, there was a concentration of dense – yielding grasses called cereals. These were barley and wheat and sorghum and millet. They introduced farming to the rest of the world through plant selection. They planted the seeds, took care of the seeds, and removed unwanted grasses through the introduction of hoeing and ploughing, irrigation and flood control mechanisms which are still in use today. The introduction of farming prompted population growth, with steady and selective food source; there were defined settlements and the emergence of a more complex social organization due to population growth. The surplus production of food crops was traded, and the economy was built. The population increase also gave rise to job specialization; some were traders, artisans, blacksmith etc. "It was along the Nile River and its environs that human beings started to develop the patterns that would result in the complex societies that we now know" (Falola 1996: 51). That is why I said that Africa was the pacesetter of contemporary Development.

In terms of trade, (Local and International), the wealth accumulated by African merchants, who exchanged African products for foreign trade goods, formed the basis of complex urban polities on the coast beginning in the early 1st millennium CE. These polities later had different and well-defined social hierarchies that incorporated social and religious elites, commoners, foreigners, and enslaved persons (Falola 1996: 53). The elite managed and financed a complicated and extensive interregional trade network. They also patronized specialized craft specialists, including ironworkers, coal miners, mangrove cutters, and sailors. African merchants provided the bulk of the export trade goods from East Africa, including ivory, skins, and rock crystal, slaves, and rhinoceros horns. This represents the earliest forms of international relations and international trade. As it was possible for Egyptian merchants to relate with African societies and other parts of the world and to bridge world cultural differences "through the dissemination of ideas and skills to and from Asia, Europe, and Africa, and in the process, Africa became an International mainspring rightly to be acclaimed as a key component of world civilization. In that way, Africa became a touchstone of ancient world civilizations, which continued to be fed for centuries, by continuous and abounding input from Africans and Africa" (Gibbons 1916: 77).

East African settlers and indigenes included farmers, fishers, traders, scribes, rulers, and enslaved persons. Economic and social interaction among diverse groups who made their living from hunting, herding, farming, and ironworking laid the foundation from which international trade exchange systems interlocked. By the end of the 1st millennium CE, the EAC had become a regular partner in the millennia-old long-distance exchanges that reached as far as the Arabian Peninsula, India, Sri Lanka, and China. This severely diminishes colonial archaeology that privileged the idea that foreigner traders were the primary agents of change. By the 13th century, there had emerged African urban elite that financed, managed, and controlled local, regional, and interregional trade and communications along the East African seaboard. Innovations in ironworking aided agricultural intensification and specialization in hunting, fishing, and herding. These changes improved the quality of life and precipitated population growth and economic prosperity (KS Fage, 1996: 45-49).

There was a profound role played by technology in the development of African societies. Varying degrees of laboratory research and experimentation must have preceded iron production. The field of technology influenced and impacted, in no small measure, on the evolution of urbanism. This technological shift could cause profound changes in the complexity of African societies—iron represented power (Bovill 1933: 101). In West Africa, the blacksmith who made tools and weapons had an essential place in society, often with religious powers and functions. Iron hoes, which made the land more productive, and iron weapons, which made the warrior more powerful, had symbolic meaning in several West African societies. Those who knew the secrets of iron making gained ritual and sometimes political power (Crowder 1968: 94-95).

Unlike in the Americas, where metallurgy was a very late and limited development, Africans had iron from a relatively early date, developing ingenious furnaces to produce the high heat (1100F) needed for the production and to control the amount of air that reached the carbon and iron ore necessary for making iron. Except for those regions directly influenced by the great Bronze Age civilization of Pharaonic Egypt, much of Africa skipped right into the Iron Age, taking the underlying technology, and adapting it to local conditions and resources. The working of bronze was also known to Africans. By A.D1000, remarkably lifelike bronze sculptures of great technical virtuosity were cast at the city-state of Ife in Nigeria by the Yoruba people (Agiri 1975: 24-27).

Industrialization was equally on the move in early African times. African Societies could boast of "several industries such as the clothing industry, which involves cloth weaving, dyeing, cotton spinning, sewing of the strips to make garments and embroidery."

[24]. There were also carving industry and Iron smelting industry. There were a lot of different specialize art crafts that were gradually resulting to a beehive of Industries in Africa before it was rudely interrupted by external forces who now claim that Africa had and still has nothing to offer in terms of development (Anene 1986: 102)

In Architecture, Africa was equally exceptional. The pyramid of Egypt is a tangible example of African Architectural skills before European Colonization. All these facts mentioned above and many more not mentioned were vital signs and indices of development in Early African societies.

Underdevelopment as Applied to Contemporary Africa

Sound knowledge of the concept of development is a very crucial factor in equally having experience of underdevelopment. Albeit, development is not always the opposite of underdevelopment. Underdevelopment is not the complete absence of progress because it is a relative concept, used to compare nations with one another in terms of development, "Used primarily to distinguish states along benchmarks concerning human development—such as macro-economic growth, health, education, and standards of living—an "underdeveloped" state is framed as the antithesis of a "developed", modern, or industrialized country". The term underdevelopment refers to that state of an economy where levels of living of masses are deficient due to very low levels of per capita income resulting from low levels of productivity and high growth rates of population. Underdeveloped countries are now known as 'developing countries' signifying that such nations are capable of and are indeed making serious efforts to overcome their problems of poverty and low income. Hence, Western scholars use the term 'development' to mean industrialization, economic growth and the living standards associated with prosperity, such as increased life expectancy, health-care, free education etc. Countries where these positive lifestyles, as mentioned above, are still lacking or inadequate are often said to be 'underdeveloped'.

What some people, especially colonialist's apologists, see as the causes of underdevelopment in Africa, are instead the consequences of underdevelopment through African colonial heritage and the firm grip of the forces of imperialism. All the seemingly internal forces ravaging Africa today were bequeathed to Africa in its post-colonial strive. There is a need to keep in view the sprawling impacts of African colonial history as well as the continued subjugation of its efforts to develop by forces of imperialism. In other words, "Modern underdevelopment expresses a particular relationship of exploitation… underdevelopment with which the world is now pre-occupied with is a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation" (Helliener 1979: 217-221). Without mincing words,

the consequences, not the causes, of 'colonially inherited' African underdevelopment includes corruption at all levels, political and economic injustice, poverty, illiteracy, terrorism, unemployment, low per capita income, unskilled labour etc. All these as inherited by external forces of western capitalist societies have set African countries aside as underdeveloped as they are characterized, in contrast with rogue western nations, and identified as thus:

•Their economies are based on the production of cash crops and raw materials for export with little or no manufacturing industry.

•They have low economic growth, little capital to invest, and high levels of unemployment and underemployment.

•There is little or no formal education with low levels of literacy.

•There is famine and malnutrition.

•There is a lack of primary health care with high levels of diseases, high infant mortality, and low life expectancy.

•There are weak and nonexistent communications and transport networks.

•There are continuous ethnic, tribal, and religious conflicts, with electoral violence. Etc.

Africa is the treasure base of the entire world and blessed beyond measures. African underdevelopment is an irony indeed because as Walter Rodney rightly avers, "Throughout the period that Africa has participated in the capitalist economy, two factors have brought about underdevelopment in the first place, the capitalist countries of Europe grabbed the wealth created by African labour and from African resources, and in the second place restrictions were placed upon African capacity to make the maximum use of its economic potential-which is what development is all about" (Rodney 1972: 59).

Conclusion

From the preceding, it could be understood that Africans had achieved victory in terms of progress before the scrambling and invasion of the continent by Europeans because Africa was upwardly mobile as long as development is concerned. However, the contradiction at present is that Eurocentric view particularly the Modernization Theory holds that the causes of Africa's underdevelopment are internal, not external, forgotten that African situation still has a linkage with its colonial history. Indeed, the continent was and is exploited in such a way that it would perpetually remain dependent on the international capitalist system for its

continued existence or social reproduction. Unless it starts thinking of how to break ties with that exploitative system of western capitalism strategically, Africa will continue to face difficulty in her relationship with the other continents in the world, particularly the west. The international capitalist system is anchored on imperialism and (neo) colonialism. When one society finds itself forced to relinquish power entirely to another nation in itself is a form of underdevelopment. Colonialism fettered the development of imperialism. And imperialist deliberately hampered economic and cultural progress in Africa. Imperialism ensured that Africa lost its position in the global productive processes. Hence, Africa continues to face the wrath of neo-colonial contraption in the form of ethno-religious conflicts, corruption, poverty, injustice, inequity, the iniquity of varying scale and proportions.

Nevertheless, African Development is still very possible. That is if African leaders are fully committed to social justice, reduce trade barriers among AU member nations, encourage production integration, diversification of their economies, promote democracy, respect for the rule of law and shun corruption of all kind.

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QUEST FOR IDENTITY: THE BIPARTITE MUSICAL JOURNEY OF SAINT JANET

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Abstract

This article examines the bipartite musical movement of *Saint Janet*. It discusses how in the quest for a name and identity, *Saint Janet*, a Nigerian female pseudo-juju-gospel music practitioner budges from gospel music performances to what seems to be profaned among the same gospel music audience. This article hinged on the Maslow's hierarchy of needs' theory in discussing her quest for fame, financial gratification, and identity, among others. With the use of ethnographic techniques (key-informant interview and participant-observation), this article examines the driving force behind such bipartite development. This paper also argued that just like the dynamic nature of culture, music and musicians alike are prone to changes as the quotidian relevance of a system is to find its use in the day to day activities.

Keywords: *Saint Janet*, gospel music, bipartite, secular music, identity

Introduction

Janet Oluwatoyosi Ajilore Iyun also known as *Saint Janet,* is a Nigerian female pseudo-juju-gospel music artiste. The nickname 'saint' in her name could be seen from her religious background as she grew up as a chorister in Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S), one of the African Indigenous Churches (AIC) in Nigeria. This socio-religious experience could be a crucial factor in the bipartite musical journey of *Saint Janet,* where she budges between sacred gospel music and secular erotica musical performances. She started her musical journey in the church choir of the Cherubim and Seraphim movement of Nigeria. As early as age 15, *Saint Janet* began to singing as a professional back-up singer under one Segun Lawaye (a *juju* music artiste).

AIC in Nigeria and especially among the Yoruba of West Africa could also be referred to as the Aladura. These movements are known for their vigour and energy in the way they sing, dance and play the instruments. Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) happen to be among the two prominent white garment church movements which are also among the AIC in Nigeria (the second being Celestial Church of Christ {CCC}). The energy seen in their performances can be associated with the influence of the African traditional socio-religious institutions. Loko & Loko (2012) explain the indispensability of African folk song and African-derived performance practices in the musical liturgical of the C&S despite the introduction of Western music. Since music in Africa is highly functional, these AIC makes music as practical as possible in all aspects of their liturgical.

Singing in the C&S choir was not satisfying to *Saint Janet* as she moved to the stage of *juju* musical performance first as a back-up sing and later started on her own. However, the church identity did not leave her as she ventured into *juju*-gospel musical performances. Nevertheless, *Saint Janet* turned to raunchy, lewd, profane and erotica lyrics in an attempt to persuade her audience to accept and encourage her financially. Even with these erotica performances, *Saint Janet* applied an insidious erotica act in which gospel hymns are played or introduced at first before the introduction of lewd lyrics. Adejube (2016) explains that these thematic developments derived from gospel hymns and songs, which is seldom called 'gospel *juju*', can be seen from her religious background as a chorister in an 'aladura movement' white garment church where she grew up.

This is evident in most of her performances as she starts her singing from the 'worship style of slow but flowing tempo' songs before migrating into the exotic *juju* style for which she is known. She budges from gospel music presentation to erotica presentation in the same performance using both euphemism and dysphemism. This movement, she does swiftly and with ease as she uses parodies of existing gospel tunes just by changing the

lyrics from sacred to secular. This paper, therefore, examines this bipartite musical journey of *Saint Janet*.

Quest for Identity: The Challenges of the Nigerian Popular Musician

Popular music in Nigeria has overtime struggled with identity ranging from genres, aesthetics, performance practice and the likes. Most practitioners of popular music in Nigeria budge around from one musical style to another. The quest for identity and recognition happens to be one of the significant factors for this musical switching. Omojola (2012) explains this as the hybridisation of different musical genres. This hybridity could be explained by the inevitable change of the Nigeria popular culture as the culture itself is self-motivated and subject to change. Adedeji (2016) in explaining modern popular music in Nigeria expresses that, popular music has its roots in the existing traditional musical practice and culture while its development and modernisation has occurred through needs, contacts, foreign influence, religion and the economy among many other factors. These factors have proven to be the reason for the hybridity in today's popular music.

Despite the growth and development of popular music in the country, there seems to be a struggle for identity as it relates to musical genres amidst music artistes. No doubt that the growth in popular music in the country gave an opportunity for the creation of the different musical styles such as *juju*, *fuji*, *highlife*, *afrobeat* (originated by Fela Kuti), gospel, reggae, hip-hop and afro-pop. Also, there seems to be some set of musicians who have classified themselves as contemporary neo-soul musicians, (how they arrived at such name is for another study) such as Asa, Nneka, Bez, and Johnny Drille among others. This contemporary neo-soul was adopted by these musicians just to create a different musical identity from popular hip-hop. Therefore, it is not strange to see a Nigerian popular music artiste swerve from one genre to another.

Femi (2018) explains this hybridity and quest for musical identity as 'multi-style repression'. He describes how popular musicians in the country prearranged their identity around multiple style regression which instigates various repressions by trying their hand on numerous musical genres with the end of locating their musical identity or label while discovering their stratum in the Nigerian entertainment industry. Examples of this concept exist from the different generations of popular music artistes in the country.

In a search for social identity, *Saint Janet*, a female *pseudo-juju* employs different musical ways in gratifying her audience as the need arises. Each performance context determines the mode of performance and what exactly is being served. *Juju*-gospel -- a genre peculiar to what is being performed primarily during church programmes that are outside liturgical -- is

her principal act as she starts her performance before venturing into the erotica performances with euphemism applied intermittently. These erotica performances could sometimes follow a mixed practice of different musical genres depending on the audience. A youth filled audience will enjoy a blend of *juju*-gospel and *hip-hop* while the adult mostly enjoyed a mixture of *juju*-gospel and *highlife*.

This research was hinged on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory with a figure shown below. The deficiency of any of the needs/wants to be explained below motivates people to pursue those needs with little or no regard to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of their actions. Consequently, according to this theory, one must satisfy the lower level of basic needs before progressing on to meet a higher level of growth needs. Once the lower demand is satisfied, then one can take a step to the next level. To resourcefully satisfy such level, especially in a developing country like Nigeria, the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the means are neglected as people just want to enter into that basic level of needs.

Fig. 1.1 Maslow's Pyramid showing the five levels of human needs

This theory, as proposed by Maslow (1943), suggested that the deficiency of the above needs/wants motivates people to do the extra-ordinary to meet their needs/wants. In as much as there seems to be a drive for material success in the Nigerian music industry, artiste likewise goes for the trending issues in the media to 'hammer' (a term used among the Nigerian popular music culture which means to be successful in term of money and fame). From the hip-hop musicians to the *fuji* musicians and from the *juju* musicians to the highlife musicians, everybody seems to be singing about love, sex, women and money. The music videos that propagates this music also contributes immensely to this development by showing half-naked women, love scenes and men taking drugs with little or no restrictions.

Severe socio-economic problems in the country marked the last few decades of the 20th century as a result of which significant changes began to emerge in the lifestyles of many Nigerians. (Omojola 2006). Most youths in the country were forced to find solace and comfort in armed robbery, internet fraud (Yahoo-yahoo), and prostitution. The music artistes were not left out as they altered the entertainment industry. They sing songs about women, sex, drug and money more often than not to appeal to their various audiences. Using the theory of this research study, *Saint Janet* is seen doing everything possible to attain the socio-economic value of the society she belongs to.

This new development, especially in the 21st century, is the motive that drives many music artistes into what they are doing now, including *Saint Janet*. *Saint Janet* is seen helping different people to meet the needs of their family members as she accommodates close to twenty musicians in her band, and they all get paid. This seems to be true because she has 2 to 3 back-up singers, 1 bassist, 1 guitarist, 1 drummer (trap set), 2 keyboardists, 2 *gangan* (talking drum), 1 *iya-ilu* (master drum), 3 *sakara*, and altogether 7 percussionists, 2 exotic dancers, 1 manager, 1 sound engineer with 2 technical assistants. The picture below shows some of these musicians playing their respective roles in her performance.

Figure 2: Figure showing her back-up singer and percussionists

Saint Janet Bipartite Musical Journey: From Sacred to Secular

While sacred music can be any music (songs or instrumentals) associated with religion or deity, secular music, on the other hand, is the opposite of holy; they are music that is disassociated from any religious ideology. Worldly means being separated from (not associated or concerned with) religion. Sacred music, therefore, according to this paper, is the music that is related to the church, Christian community or gospel music. Gospel music as defined by Adedeji (2004) is a type of Christian music which preaches the good news of Jesus Christ made popular by public performance, electronic media, and information technology such as radio, television, the recording world and the internet.

Right from the baroque era in music, music artists have been seen to opt-out from the church and perform (write) secular music (lyrics) to soothe their longings for fame, money and popularity. Johann Sebastian Bach who wrote some church songs later ended up writing secular songs also. In the Western world, especially the United States of America, popular music artists like Beyoncé, Whitney Houston, and Robert Kelly grew up in the church and wrote both sacred and secular music. Some started as gospel music artistes but later swerved into the secular music industry for various reasons.

In Nigeria, numerous music artistes also started their career in the church as chorister, church musicians (instrumentalists) and music director before opting out to pursue their secular music career in the Nigerian entertainment industry.

A website listing some of these people has these to say;

> 1 DON JAZZY
> I started music in the church. In the choir at some point (Pauses), you know what? I don't want to spill everything yet. I'll be writing an autobiography; my dad and I are working on it.
>
> 2 DBANJ
> I joined the choir and played every instrument I could lay my hands on. At every opportunity I got, I tried to express myself through music
>
> 3 J MARTINS
> I started with singing. My mum was a Choir mistress, so I think the seven of us caught the singing bug from her…

Others are; TIMAYA, WAJE, WIZKID, PSQUARE, BANKY W, WANDE COAL, TERRY G, IYANYA, and DARE ART ALADE.

Source: (http://www.nairaland.com/1830967/top-12-nigerian-artistes-moved).

Seeing Omotoyosi (*Saint Janet*) following this pattern is not new as so many examples were set before her. Some of these people at various intervals have their specific reason for leaving the church to the street. Samuel (2000; 28), explained that Duro Ladipo, the son of a Catechist under Reverend Mackay of the Anglican Mission was involved with church music activities as a lay reader and choirmaster. He continued that the church was against the employment of instruments used for traditional festivals and rituals for Christian worship. This made him (Duro Ladipo) seek more secular performances with the use of traditional musical instruments.

The reconstruction or deconstruction of gospel music lyrics happened to be the tool *Saint Janet* uses in her bipartite musical journey. She makes use of parody and satire in remixing popular gospel music lyrics to accommodate her erotica lyrics. Nevertheless, we have seen popular music artistes in the country-leaning towards this new development of reconstructing Christian liturgy worship songs into new Nigerian *hip-hop* musical genre, thereby making a parody of the existing gospel lyrics. For instance, the chorus of this Nigerian hip-hop artist *DreSan* featuring *Small Doctor*, with the song titled *feyinti* is a perfect example of such;

Feyinti, (Resting, Relaxing)
Baby mi ni mo feyinti, (I am relaxing with my baby)
Omu e ni mo feyinti/Igbaaya e ni mo feyinti, (I'm resting on her bosom/breast)
Mi o le subu (I cannot fall)

The above lyric is a direct parody of an existing popular Christian song with author unknown.

F'eyinti f'eyinti (Resting, Relaxing)
Jesu ni mo f'eyinti (I am resting on Jesus)
Jesu ni mo f'eyinti (I am resting on Jesus)
Mi o le subu (I cannot fall)

The melody of the above song remains the same with little alteration, as seen in the figure below.

Musical figure 2.1 staff notation showing the melody for *fehinti fehinti*

However, *Saint Janet* also follows the same style of parody and reconstruction of gospel music. When asked the reason, she changes Christian/gospel songs; she replied; *I am not the only one that changes gospel lyrics as most Nigerian popular music artiste are also fond of that;* she continued; *even church singers and choristers to are fond of changing secular songs to suit their praise and worship songs in the church.* She seems not to have enough justification for reconstructing or deconstructing gospel music (as the case may be) into her erotic songs. Adedeji (2005) in his historical development of Nigerian Gospel music styles explained that Nigerian gospel music in the 2000s has gone wild with the active use of radical secular hip hop styles and adoption of youthful gangsterism manifestations; all of which are features of the new school obsession and the dances that follow. Whether they enhance or destroy the gospel message intended by the music is a subject for another research. Nevertheless, Adedeji (2014) later observes that the Lucifer/Satan factor theory forms the significant sources of demonically-inspired music. Perhaps this is subjected to academic discourse as the issue of demon could and should not be associated with secular music.

It is so ironic that *Saint Janet* believes that her musical inspiration is from God. However, most of her critics are from the socio-religious environment and believe that her inspiration is not and can never be from God; preferably, from the Devil, who is always an anti-God. This assertion, therefore, supports the Adedeji (2014) theory of Lucifer/Satan factor. Some of the audience were interviewed at random, and when asked about their view of the music of *Saint Janet*, they believed that her music is devilish and hell-bound. Consequently, this can be linked to her deconstruction of gospel music.

Listed below are some of the songs by *Saint Janet*, which are initially performed in the sacred space, and her version of such songs. Thus, she refers to herself, *Saint Janet*, the General Overseer of Saint Bottles Cathedral, a.k.a. Sinners' Chapel. A nickname derived from her religious background.

Original Church/Gospel song

O ti mu mi gbagbe won o	You have made me forget all
Ibanuje Igbakan /2x	All my past sorrows
Ase were nise Oluwa,	The Lord works in a mysterious way
Oba ti mo pe, to je /2x	The King that answers anytime I call

The above song is a famous gospel eulogy that addresses God as the King, who takes away sorrows and pains. The song is mostly used at both the liturgical and non-liturgical service of the church and does give succour and help to those still looking unto God for help. The same song was taking out of context and thereby the content (lyrics) were change by this *Saint Janet,* the General Overseer of Sinners' Chapel. *She* super-imposed sexual lyrics into it thus reconstructing the message the song was initially meant for. Her version below was talking about how a lady helped a man to forget his former wives/concubines. Apart from the parody employed, there was also the use of satire, talking about how someone's breast is small compared to others.

Saint Bottle's Cathedral Version

Mo ti mu e gbagbe won	I made you forgot them
Iyawo e igba kan	All your past wives
A se tintin l'omu Tobi	No wonder, Tobi's breast is so small
Omu ti ote to ke	She cries aloud anytime you press them

Another super-imposition of lewd/sexual lyrics to a gospel tune is;

Original gospel composition

Ohun to se ma ya mi le nu o Baba I'm amazed at what you've done, Father
O nu mije mi nu, o sekun mi derin o You wipe away my tears and turned my cries to laughter
Ohun to se ma ye mi lenu o Baba I'm amazed at what you've done, Father

The above gospel song is simply a song of thanksgiving and appreciation to God for His wonders and miracles saying He (God) hath wiped away tears and turned my mourning into dancing. Similarly, *Saint Janet* picked the above gospel song and deconstructed it by bringing in her suggestive lyrics to go well with and appeal to her followers and listeners. Below is her erotic version of the above gospel song.

Saint Bottle's Cathedral Version

Ohun to se ma ya mi lenu o Boda Brother, I'm amazed at what you've done
O ba sisi yen su, o tu gbe f'awon ore e You slept with her and transferred her to your friend,
Ohun to se ma ya mi lenu o Boda. Brother, I'm amazed at what you've done

Her version was a satire where a promiscuous man was mentioned for living in a weird way of having sex with a lady and transferring the same lady to his friend for such action.

Another example is

Original gospel composition

Emi o mo o, emi o mo	I do not know
Ona na, ibi ti ba ti m' ope mi wa	How to give my praise

The above gospel song eulogises God and also talks about people's desire to praise God.

Saint Bottle's Cathedral Version

Emi o mo o, emi o mo	I do not know
Ona na, ibi ti ba ti po'ran mi mo	Where to insert my penis (euphemism applied)

Sometimes, Saint Jane applies euphemism during her erotica musical performances. The euphemism helps in passing the same erotica message with little decency. *P'oran* used in the above composition is a euphemism used to replace the male sexual anatomy.

Eroticism in *Saint Janet* Composition

Saint Janet first erotic music album represents an enormous chunk of mentioning sex and sexual activities without restriction. Even when other famous musicians stick to euphemism in calling the male private organ, banana, or some other names, *Saint Janet* opted for the use of *oko* (penis), the female part *obo* (vagina) and *omu* (breast). The introduction of this

musical album was a shock to the public, especially Lagos State, where she usually performs. It was announced that her music had been banned just to find out later that those who banned her music are the same people who invite her for performances at their private parties.

Singing about sex and sexuality in Nigerian popular music is a norm in today's 21st century musical performance because of its socio-cultural quotidian value. Popular media in Nigeria just like her American counterpart is chock-a-block of references to sex both in the aural and the visual form. Though references to sex in performing and visual art seemed to be in existence since the 18th and 19th century but talking publicly about sex, sexual activities and eroticism were not popular in the community.

Though, Olajubu (1972) explained that far back in ages especially in Ibadan, Western Nigeria, singing of songs and mentioning of words that contain apparent references to sex are allowed on special occasions in many Yoruba societies for specific days in the year during annual festivals. Singing and music have always played an essential role in learning and the communication of culture. Children learn from role models (especially in the entertainment circle); what they see and hear. For many years, some children television channels have effectively used the combination of words, music and fast-paced animation to achieve learning. Now with the introduction of the virtual community, even when songs, music and videos are banned from the general public space, they still find their ways into the virtual community.

The 44 minutes, 19 seconds *faaji live* musical album started with lovely and popular gospel music used as a chorus in most churches in the country; 'Heavenly Lord, your name is wonderful...'. After this short musical introduction, the real references to sex and sexual object were introduced with both euphemism and dysphemism. Such as;

Idi nla, idi bebere,
Ni boda gbe lo, ah! Nkan be
Kini e to le, lo jo e loju,
Kini e to le, lo ya o lenu,
Boda oni shan o, ope lo ye o
Oko mi lale, oko mi loru
Oko oko oko, kuse
Iyanu to se labe mi, lo jo mi loju
Mo dupe isan osan, mo tu dupe isan oru
Isan e ti ki ro, ni gbekele mi

Iyin ogo ye o o
Bo se wo mi lóru ana e, ni ko ma se

Translation

Big buttock, Full-sized buttock
That man must be enjoying!
You pride in your manhood
...
This man with muscle, kudos to you
My penis, every time of the day!
Well-done the penis
Your sexual prowess was breath-taking
I am thankful for the sexual strength every time
I am always elated by your libido
Kudos to you
Never stop devouring me like you did last night.

The word 'devouring' as used in the above text means to eat up greedily and passionately but in a sexual act. While in the three songs that started this erotic live album, *Saint Janet* applied a little discretion by using euphemism in mentioning sex and sexual objects whereas, such modesty was thrown into the wind when she sang those lewd songs. She substituted the male organ word called oko (penis) in Yoruba to *kini* (something). When approached; she answered; *I am also careful in my mentioning of these words (lewd and erotic), but people do ask for it and always want it raw*. This explained the hypocritical nature of the society in condemning what they love.

For instance, in the song below;

Oyin ni, kini abe re, oyin ni
O fi la sisi yen, kotun mo na ile mo…
Kini abe re dun
(Resp) odun odun jo yin lo

Your sexual anatomy is like honey
You use it on that lady, and she stays glued to you
Your sexual anatomy is sweet
Sweeter than honey.

Eroticism in *Saint Janet* musical performances takes a significant chunk of her presentation. Adebola (2012) in supporting this claim, explains the acceptance and the controversial issues towards this randy female music performer. He discusses how *Saint Janet* caused huge budge with her debut musical album; *Faaji plus,* also the controversial scorn from the church circle and how her music was banned on radio and in many homes but was allowed full airing with all enthusiasm in beer parlours and street corners.

Most of the famous musicians in the country, especially the hip-hop musicians, are not left out in this coding of the sexual object in their music. At some point in the country, most Nigerian hip-hop musicians are substituting the word penis to be 'banana' making use of the said 'banana' in their songs and occasionally singing the lewd and sexual lyrics with it. Examples are *D'Prince* (a Nigerian hip-hop artiste) music; *you go chop banana* meaning you are going to eat banana, *Slyde* (a new Nigerian hip-hop artiste) song; *wa je banana* translated; you will eat banana, and *Wande Coal* (a famous Nigerian Hip-hop artist) music; *take banana till you go yo* translated; eat banana till you are filled up'.

This euphemism approach is necessary because sex and sexual issues are not meant for public discourse both in Western and African perspectives. Anybody challenging the norm is seen as a 'bad person' as *Obesere* (a *fuji* music artiste in Nigeria) who is also guilty in this issue termed himself as *Oba Alasaka* meaning the king of the uncultured. As Dare (2005) explained the free expression of sexual matters exercised by *Obesere* (whose self-proclaimed sobriety is the master of lewd jokes) and many other Nigerian musicians in the popular entertainment has quite expectedly elicited opprobrium and disdain from a large section of the public".

The disapproval and stigma of these free expressions of vulgar, sexual and erotic words (lyrics) by famous musicians are frowned at by the socio-religious community of the country especially among the Yoruba of Nigeria that believes in the concept of omoluabi (a good child). Likewise, the Abrahamic (Islam and Christianity) religions in the country see it as a sin (haram) to God and humanity, except in few occasions and also in the concept of marriage institution when the wife's friend and relative are at liberty to mention the erotic words with little or no restriction.

Supporting the above claim, Ajibade (2005), explains that the issue of erotic words is usually limited to the older adults who are married, and the younger ones are somehow forbidden to talk about sexual relationships, especially in public. Nonetheless, human beings are social animals with feelings, emotions, and moods towards our surroundings.

He continued; they can mention the sexual organs of both male and female without any restriction. They can also talk about sexual intercourse without any form of social sanction". *Saint Janet's* response to this act is as a result of what the people want and the quotidian relevance of the mass and popular culture. She (*Saint Janet*) thinks that she is not the first and will not be the last to embark on this concept of isokuso (indecent talk).

Does that mean she is uncultured in her references to sex and sexual object? The answer is a capital NO, as she is seen to keep the best for the last. *Saint Janet* is of the habit of starting her performances with a bipartite nature of decent gospel songs first before embarking on her erotic-*juju* performance of lewd and sexual (profane) lyrics. She also considers the fact of transporting this marriage concept out of the four walls of marriage into the social space by singing the erotic in public areas of bars, beer parlours and clubs which she claimed has helped couples to ignite their sexual lives.

According to her, the inclusion of these erotic and lewd words in her performance was to make people laugh and ease themselves of their stress. She (*Saint Janet*), while observing the hustle and bustle of life on the streets of Lagos, people who live in Lagos (Lagosians) do not have time to rest or relax. Instead, they are always running helter-skelter looking for ends meet. She continued, "*this is the reason people love me to play in their clubs and bars because they love the way I ease their tension and make them relax with my erotic lyrics*."

Conclusion

The struggle for musical identity torments the Nigerian popular music industry. This is because of the battle that existed as a result of the proliferation in the industry. Hence, every music artist is consciously or unconsciously saddled with the responsibility to remain relevant or fizzle out from the industry. Also, the quotidian socio-economic applicability, among others is one of the factors responsible for this quest for identity. *Saint Janet*, a female pseudo-*juju* popular music artiste in the country, also happens to be in this category. In her pursuit of musical personality, she budges bipartitely from sacred to secular music.

Her sacred musical performances include the use of famous gospel choruses used at both liturgical and non-liturgical activities of the church community. However, as secular, she employs parody and satire in reconstructing the same gospel music to appeal to her audience. A musical composition that is full of erotica and lewd lyrics, a style is forbidden by some, yet, however, accepted others. This shows the hypocritical nature of society at large.

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FILMIC REFLECTION ON PRESSED FREEDOM: REVISITING THE SCENIC REPRESENTATIONS IN TUNDE KELANI'S SAWOROIDE (1999)

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More than 20 years after its initial release, Saworoide remains the most popular and often cited creative work of Tunde Kelani. Released in 1999 as a paradoxical congratulatory yet cautionary message -to a country reclaiming democracy after decades of military rule-, Saworoide remains a cinematic call for reflection on governance crises in Post-colonial Africa. Like many of his works, Saworoide is a classical satire on Nigeria politics that condemns corruption and abuse of state power. With a narrative technique relying heavily on Yoruba oral tradition and animist realism, Tunde Kelani presents an allegorical tale of breach of the social pact by the leaders of the fictional town, Jogbo. Jogbo is a monarchical parody for neo-liberal practices bedeviling the African States[8] wherein ruling elites and foreign merchants collaborate to usurp national resources to the detriment of the masses. There are several ways to consider the socio-political relevance of the film and indeed various works have attempted to look at it from different lenses. This essay examines the representations of repression of the press in Tunde Kelani's Saworoide, contextualizes these representations in light of the Nigerian experience (specifically since the return to democracy), and argues for the necessity of a free press if the principles of a binding social contract are to be adhered to.

Before discussing instances of repression of the press in the film, it is necessary to recount the plot of the film. Saworoide is one of the collaborations between the Tunde Kelani and the playwright, Akinwunmi Ishola. Adapted from a play of the latter with the same title as the film, it is in both its written and cinematic form a parable of the drum as the voice of the people. Set in the imaginary ancient city of Jogbo, the story is about a longstanding pact

[8] Olaiya, I. | Adam, E (Reviewing editor). 2020. "Narrative of governance crisis in Nigeria: Allegory of resource curse and "Emergence" in Tunde Kelani's *Saworoide* and *Agogo-Èèwò"*, *Cogent Social Sciences*, 6:1

between the people of the town and their kings[9] – that the Kings must see to the development and growth of the nation and are incapacitated from amassing wealth off public treasury-, a pact summarized in the mystical symbiosis of the Ade Ide (Brass Crown) representing the Kings and the Saworoide (Brass Bells) representing the People. None can exist outside the other. To enforce the pact, a new king must submit himself to certain rituals involving incisions on his body and incantations. This brings unity between the king, the symbols of his authority, the people, and the man who plays the drum (who carries similar incisions as the king). A king who fails to submit himself to this arrangement cannot wear Ade Ide restfully for he would be in constant fears that Saworoide must not be played within his hearing range lest he dies of a headache immediately. This cohesive arrangement as depicted in the film may be considered as an allusion to the similar arrangement within the Yoruba traditional system[10] of checks and balances of its monarchical structure, a phenomenon lacking in the current political blueprint of Nigeria where the constitution, in all practicality, functions not more than a storm in a teacup against the ruling elite and business class.

Lapite (played by Kola Oyewo) is the new king-elect of Jogbo. A member of the ruling elite, Lapite belongs to the class of Post-colonial African leaders who are no better than the colonialists, with the mission to assume the vacant colonialist positions and lifestyle, engage in ostentatious spending, and cultivated condescension for the people they represent. In a series of schemes plotted with the Balogun (Lere Paimo) – a chief and his closest ally-, Lapite boycotts the complete ritual process of installation, eliminates his political rivals thereby forcing Ayangalu - the drummer capable of playing Saworoide because he bears the same incision as with the king - into exile. With all oppositions either eliminated or forced into exile, the stage is set for full-scale exploitation and reckless plunder of the state's resources with foreign merchants, looting and embezzlement of public funds together with the chiefs, suppression of dissidents, and environmental pollution. Jogbo descended into full tyranny and Lapite lost popular support. The youths, funded by the foreign merchants, revolted and captured the Ade Ide, throwing the King into disarray. Lapite turns to the same foreign merchants who provided him superior military enforcement led by Ogagun Lagata (Kunle Bamtefa) to recapture Ade Ide. In the unfolding events, he is ultimately consumed by the collaborative scheme with the military. Here, Tunde Kelani is not addressing a novel but long-standing problem of neo-colonialism which has put the true independence of African Countries in question. The Timber Company represents many foreign companies whose mandates can be summarized as follows: Maximize profit at any cost, obtain local labor at

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9 Anyanwu, C. 2019 "The Filmic Space and the Adaptation of Nigerian Literary Genres." *The Guardian,* 24 February, p. 24.

10 Ibid

the barest minimum, befriend, and if possible, determine government in power to ensure continuous existence. Furthermore, we are reminded of the complicity of the corrupt African leaders who trade their national conscience for money. In a didactic style typical of Yoruba folklore, Tunde Kelani warns of the consequences of such an inhumane partnership to defraud one's nation.

Ogagun Lagata opportunistically assuming the leadership of Jogbo by force, presents a military reign of terror, highhandedness, corruption, and tyranny. It takes a counter insurgence by the youth to conquer Lagata and thereby, initiating a new order as seen by the commencement of installation rites for young prince Adebola Adebami.

The allegorical form of Saworoide barely covers its political sentiments and overt portrayal of the attributes of repressive regimes in the preceding decades to its release. One of these is the infraction of press freedom and freedom of expression revealed through various scenes in the films. Certainly, there is a correlation between good governance and effective media institutions, and across Post-colonial Africa, it is easy to cite instances of infraction or total subjugation of the press. Inhibition of Press freedom in Africa emerged as an uncelebrated legacy of colonialism and when one considers the specific situations of Nigeria, restrictive media laws could be said to have taken roots in 1903 with the enactment of the Newspaper Ordinance of that year, the sedition Ordinance of 1909 and Ordinance No. 40 (*1917*) which curb the "excesses" of local press and scare nationalists from attacking colonial administration[11]. Most of those Draconian laws have remained in Nigeria's law books because the new ruling elites who took over from the colonialists were not interested in abrogating them. It is not therefore surprising that the Tafawa Balewa Administration in 1964 re-enacted the colonial repressive acts that serve as a basis for gagging press freedom in post-independence Nigeria.

If the civilian administration after independence was not particularly media-friendly, the different military rules from 1966-1999 represented terror of different degrees to the press. There were various notorious and obnoxious decrees. One of the many that stand out in repression is Decree 4 of 1984, a rehash of an earlier piece of military law that sought to protect public officers against 'embarrassment' whether or not such publication by the press was true or not. It was under this decree, during the General Buhari regime, that two journalists – Nduka Irabor and Tunde Thompson of The Guardian- were arrested, tried, and

[11] Layefa,G., Johnson, W, A. 2016. "The Quest for Press Freedom in Nigeria: Not a Forlorn Struggle". *Journal of Research and Development,* Vol. 2, No. 10.

convicted for refusing to disclose the source of a supposedly well-guarded secret of the military government[12].

It is against this historical backdrop of repression by different regimes that Tunde Kelani presents instances of press subjugation as a by-product of tyranny. Two major instances are briefly examined in this essay. One is where the Palace chiefs show off their newly acquired expensive vehicles in the palace courtyard and the pressmen present, on request of the chiefs, were physically assaulted and thrown out by the palace guards for demanding information on how they acquired the expensive cars. The dialogue is particularly interesting and below is a portion (in English).

Pressman: Sir these cars are sleek

Bada: They are not bad, thanks

Pressman: But where did you get the money for the cars?

Balogun: I beg your pardon?

Pressman: I'm sorry, it's just an interview

Balogun: What an idiot

Seriki: Damn your father

Balogun: You, switch off that camera, what impudence!

Seriki: How did they get into the palace?

Balogun: Where are the palace guards?

Balogun, Bada & Seriki: Throw them out!

Pressman: I'm sorry, it's just an interview

Seriki: What an insult[13].

The other instance is when Lapite decided to celebrate his 15th Anniversary of ascension in grand style. Along with other side events, a press conference event is organized. From the conversation between Balogun and Lapite, one discovers that the press conference was set

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12 Nwanne, B, U. 2014. "Another Look at Press Freedom in Nigeria". *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences* Vol. 2 No. 4

13 Kelani, T. 1999. Saworoide. Mainframe Productions.

up to encourage sycophancy and baseless propaganda of the state's success, a political scheme to manipulate public opinion. In the course of the press conference, a fearless reporter seized the microphone and asked questions that begs accountability and transparency from Lapite. He is verbally assaulted and we see the trio of the Police Chief, Balogun, and Lapite a horrendous payback for his "insolence". We are confronted with the harsh reality of the difficulty of being a reporter or watchdog of the state in both instances and we are reminded of fatal consequences that daring journalists have suffered. The story of Dele Giwa becomes apt.

Whether the various democratic dispensations have headed to the covert warnings of the Saworoide and allowed the press to play their constitutional role in instituting democratic values and strengthening the rule of law under various administrations is a question for critical reflection especially when one considers the different approaches of the various administrations since 1999. The Obasanjo's administration though spoke of the need for a free press, its disposition, and body language did not always support its public statements[14]. Under this administration, the African Independent Television, a private media outfit was invaded by security agents. The relationship between President Goodluck Jonathan and the press may be best described as that of cautious optimism. The president occasionally appreciates the role of an unfettered press in national development but often over-reacts to seeming "bad press"[15]. In the two terms of the incumbent President of Nigeria, the level of intolerance for the press seems to have increased drastically. Under Buhari's first elected term, CPJ documented detentions, assaults, and harassment of the press. There was the particular case of Jones Abiri, a journalist, who was detained for more than two years in the secret service dungeon. Another instance is that of Agba Jalingo, the publisher of CrossRiverWatch who is standing trial for "treason" over a report alleging that the governor of Cross River State, Ben Ayade, diverted N500 million belonging to the state government. This case has been listed by One Free Press Coalition as among 10 "most urgent" cases of threats to press freedom around the world[16].

The most recent press drama sparked different outbursts and reactions of the public and has reminded one of Tunde Kelani's Saworoide and more specifically, the scene where the chiefs verbally assaulted the press. Former Minister of Aviation, Femi Fani Kayode harangues a pressman for questioning him on 'who was "bankrolling" his nationwide travels inspecting

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14 Nwanne, B, U. 2014. "Another Look at Press Freedom in Nigeria". *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences* Vol. 2 No. 4

15 Ibid

16 https://cpj.org/2019/09/nigerian-publisher-agba-jalingo-charged-with-treas/

the projects of different governors[17]. The politician's reply points to the aggressive and defensive posture of many politicians when confronted with questions that beg transparency or accountability. Below is a portion from his replies:

> "……What type of stupid question is that? Bankrolling who? Do you know who you are talking to? I will not take any questions from this man. What type of insulting question is that? Which bankroll? To do what? Who can give me money for anything?" …… I could see from your face before you got here, how stupid you are. Don't ever talk to me like that. Who do you think you're talking to? Bankroll who? You think I am one of those ones you… from who, when, how? You have a small mind, very small mind. Don't judge me by your own standards.[18]"

Femi Fani Kayode is not a public office holder under the current dispensation. However, the highhandedness and level of intolerance of the incumbent have made the press susceptible to abuse and disrespect by every powerful citizen. A translated Yoruba adage that one suffers contemptuous disrespect from irrelevant problems when one is defeated by a larger one corroborates this. Indeed, this situation is an instant reminder of Fanon's trite position that the native bourgeoisie wields the same oppressive political power on the masses as the colonialists[19]. The virility of the press as the watchdog of the nation continues to shrink in the face of an unprecedented level of the infraction of press freedom in the last 34 years[20] by a democratic government.

In retrospect of the reclamation of democracy in 1999, Tunde Kelani's film becomes more than cinematic documentation of the transition from a difficult political phase in post-independent Nigeria and celebration of democracy but a reminder that democracy becomes impracticable unless there is a genuine symbiosis between the government and the people without subversion or overturn of all institutional frameworks that drive democracy, including a free press.

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17 Ibid

18 https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/410940-video-of-fani-kayode-verbally-attacking-another-journalist-surfaces.html

19 Frantz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*. 145. New York: Grove Press, 1963.

20 https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/361738-under-buhari-nigeria-records-worst-attacks-on-journalists-in-34-years-report.html

POSTSCRIPT: PERFORMING IDENTITY, MARGINALITY AND OTHERNESS IN THE GLOBAL BACKYARD

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Introduction

The "how, why, and in what context" identity is formed and performed has been the subject of critique for years. As a term adopted to reinforce self-identification and situate marginality within the human consciousness, identity is often used today in the broad context of the diaspora, gender, and migration. Becoming a popular term only from the 1950s, Gleeson (1983) highlights the slippery early usages in two standard references: Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, published in the early 1930s, and The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, published in the 1960s. The former has no entry for identity, only a record of identification which was about processes of a criminal investigation. The latter, however, features articles on identity as it intersects with the political and the psycho-social. Identity often falls within a spectrum that means "too much," "too little" or "nothing at all" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 1). However, the conceptual and theoretical meanings of identity imbricate with hierarchy and difference, being the subject of a looped structure of the politics of race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, orientation, ability and even, location.

The term identity finds its roots in the Latin word idem, which means the same. With deconstruction across multiple spheres, which are critical of the notion of a singular unified identity, identity has come to encompass meanings that signify difference and similarity all at once (Hall, 2000; Buckingham, 2008). Although there would usually be an interface of understanding between the author of a text that reiterates identity and the reader, listener, or viewer, the implications of such meanings might often elude both. Identity is often accompanied by a prefix that gives an assigned meaning: gender identity, ethnic identity, racial(ised) identity. Identity significantly navigates memory, nostalgia, and melancholy

based on a never-ending cycle of self-reflection. This cycle is informed by signifiers of unity, empathy, or differentiation, and within it, the processes of self-identification are hinged upon a self-other dichotomy. Othering evokes both mental and real-life implications of systemic exclusion, which Africans have often internalised and replicated.

With the African identity often represented as a foil for Western identity, the African identity has been recreated, manipulated, and appropriated. Imagined and modified along time, it continues to be created in conjunction with social traditions and material culture, consistent with tension, anxieties, hope, and desire. Giving real-time evidence of fluid, multiple, and constructed identities (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000), the peculiarity of identity within the African continent destabilises the concept of essentialism. The concept of "the backyard" used in this essay attempts to supplant the traditional and euphemistic terms used to describe Africa. Presenting an existential duality, it becomes not just a place of lack, as the West would often define it, but a creative plane that is in equal measures accepting and unreceptive to processes of globalisation.

In a precarious balance of continuities and discontinuities invoked by legacies of the slave trade, colonialism, (neo) colonialism, and more evolving socio-political orders, many Africans live in complete disregard of western ideals, with some exception of the middle-class who often consciously replace African traditions with Western thoughts acquired from transnational sojourns. Internalising and reflecting only what the modern world's social-cultural determinants give them, they thrust upon these unique African interpretations, often seeped in temporality. Within language, hair and cloth fashion, cyber-culture, dance, cinematic and musical culture, religious and political norms, among other areas, these interpretations become both an expression of lack and creativity. The widespread white garment churches, and the eclectic blend that has become the increasingly popular genre, Afrobeat, are significant examples. White garment churches perform Christianity with practices not exact yet closely reminiscent of traditional African belief practices. Likewise, the genre, Afrobeats, does not conform to the lyrical and beat style of western sounds, yet it is barely reminiscent of traditional African sounds.

Othered Selves: Performance of Marginality

Consistent with Jenkins' (2014) bifurcation of identification as a matter of "external categorisation" and "internal self-identification" (p. xi), this commentary will not engage in an external appraisal of the devaluation of African lives and experiences to sustain Western hegemony; instead, the internal representations of the other is the thrust of this essay. The

representation of self and other; stereotypes and prejudices; traditions of safe-spaces and human-rights; cyber-rage and more that these incite thus become highly salient.

How does the contemporary African (with core reliance on postmodern interpretations) perform their identity or marginality? What does this performance reveal about the appropriation of marginal identities? What does it reveal about evolving modification of identity? In the broader context, how does it reveal hierarchy and power relations within political and ideological limits? The radical performances by women in Nigeria, as a marginal group, for instance, try to subvert the social construction of gender reinforcing male apical privilege. As women have often been the feminine other, or in Simone Beauvoir's words, the second sex, the essentialism in notions of gender is increasingly supplanted primarily by Nigerian cyber, literary, pop-cultural, and cinematic feminist traditions. The social distinction of female object and male subject shape women's identities and destinies (Thurman, 2010). This is reinforced especially in Africa by political and class oppression, unequal traditions, and patriarchal colonialism, among other forces.

Therefore, dissenting thinkers attest to the vicious social construction of gender that systematically represses African women (Ogundipe, 1994; Oyewumi, 2011). Appraising gender within the African continent helps to understand that the concept is not biological but historically and socially constructed (Oyewumi, 1997). Dissociating African feminist thoughts from western-oriented ideologies (Faniyi, 2019), the assessment of gender and other signifiers of identity is informed by the intersection of time and location. This intersection significantly influences the modification and appropriation of African (Nigerian) male and female identities.

Within a postcolonial continuity that seems to push postfeminism (see Dosekun, 2020) with an urgency that references gender performativity, modern bodies, and even heterosexual queerness, Isabel Falls' *I Sexually Identify As An Attack Helicopter* (2020) perhaps provides a basis for understanding and explanation, albeit situated within global literary traditions. The short story presents a fantastical, sci-fi text that explains the distinction and interpretation of biological sex and gender identity—narrating a futuristic fantasy tale about a woman whose gender was reassigned as an attack helicopter to make her a better pilot. This might seem nonsensical to a more significant percentage of Africa that, as Ogundipe (1994) argues, does not know its sexuality. However, with a lived experience that enables an understanding of identity beyond transhistorical and essentialist prescriptions, the story, in sustaining a transphobic meme "I sexually identify as an attack helicopter," presents overtly subversive and deliberately exaggerated refraction. While falling under criticism for seemingly maintaining the idea that gender identity can be manipulated, Falls performs her

marginality by simultaneously calling the attention of cis-bodies to trans experiences in the most relatable form and commodifying her difference for a living. This practice of performing marginality and humorously expressing identity is increasingly becoming a visible feature of Nigerian expressions on social media regarding media-savvy social celebrities who are gender-queer or trans people. The antiparallel art of representing a marginalised identity in a cathartic yet subversive form is the core of Nawal el Saadawi's celebrated book, *Woman at Point Zero* (1975), in which the worst tale of a woman's oppression is described not to affirm helplessness but to inspire hope.

The interconnection of identity, marginality, and othering reveals a subversive performance that challenges authoritative, hegemonic social order. It is within this intersection, as it highlights the representation of self and other, that this commentary is established. Affirming the other as a foil for the self, how performative and marginalised identities are created, manipulated, or appropriated is visible within Nigerian social traditions. A visible reflection of this cycle is seen in the real-time and cyber performance of human rights traditions and leftist labour movements and lived experiences of ethnic minorities, LGBT+, and youths/students. The human-rights tradition gives a voice to groups that have been marginalised across history, and its agents perform their marginality by continually pushing discourses off and online to ensure systemic accountability. With the LGBT+ in Nigeria, collectives like The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERS) draw from global funding and advisory support to provide safe spaces for sexual minorities in Nigeria.

African/Gender/Cultural/Minority studies and research have also drawn attention to and piqued interests in voices that have been historically marginalised. A significant measure of this phenomenon in recent times is hashtag ethnography, which combines linguistic anthropology and social movement research (see Bonilla and Rosa 2015). Likewise, feminist organising in Nigeria, radical youth movements, left students, academic radicals, and labour activists also refute the margins by embarking on industrial actions, strikes, and protests. These trends have advocated an equal representation of these othered selves, triggering a culture of empathy for all types of persons and groups that are not by default situated on the privileged sides of the binaries. While these performances of marginality speak for themselves in socio-political traditions, a particular unspoken phenomenon draws consideration in this commentary: the phenomenon of clowning and dancing bodies in Nigeria.

Clowning/Dancing Bodies: Performance of Socioeconomic Marginalization

It is perhaps an unsurprising feature of Nigerian parties or rallies to see plus-size performers or performers dressed as clowns[21]. These individuals would usually dance while guests or spectators stare in amusement. This dynamic of staring (Thomson, 2005) is interpreted as a performance that centres the viewers as privileged selves. Spectators would usually take pictures or record their demonstrations, and some would also put money in designated boxes placed strategically before the performers. Immensely popular in the Lagos metropolis, plus-size performers commodify their difference and sustain the intergenerational joke, "orobo ki bo," a play of words that describes fat persons. Within bodily political enquiry, the question of why these individuals would put up a show, purposefully showcasing their bodies in humourous form for the delight of other bodies, is raised. In the course of the performance, the watchers would sometimes even touch the breasts or bellies of the dancing bodies. The performers would later go home to a pocket or purse full of loose change offhandedly given by their watchers.

With the trend of dance clowning at parties, performing clowns would often use makeup or other aesthetic aids to mimic large-size crotches, bottoms, and breasts, often for the same ends as plus-size performers, to gain money. Ohemer (2019) argues that clowns, with their dancing bodies, negotiate survival from trauma and socioeconomic marginalisation. Within the Nigerian lived experience of neo-colonial, political, and class oppression, the latter is a significant motivation for these dancing bodies. A more political stance, however, might elude them. For instance, in Todd Phillips' directed drama *Joker* (2019), the joker's clowning was shown as a supplanted performance of a man who must deconstruct social performativity. By wearing clown makeup, he identifies as an othered self who must reclaim his freedom from capitalist and neo-liberal players. Another dimension to the dynamics of clowning bodies is the phenomena of persons having dwarfism performing their difference. Presenting themselves as a spectacle, they dance, clown, or mimic other bodies. These performances almost always give them quick social media fame, and their pictures or short videos soon become popular memes, stickers, or GIFs.

Opening up Frameworks for Consideration

Developments in artistic creation, political narratives, religious reenactions, and more in the last few decades have devoted spaces to voices that have historically never fit into the

[21] Bare-Chested Big-Sized Man at APC rally in Lagos. https://www/nairaland/com/5016882/bare-chested-big-sized-man-apc-rally

dominant norms. Emerging forms in cyberspace, music, film, and other human expressions have given prominence to otherness and social differences within the continent, with some significantly creating a reconfiguration of the other, different from dissent narratives. Cinematic creations like Genevieve Nnaji's *Lionheart* and Kemi Adetiba's *King of Boys;* musical forms like Burna Boy's *African Giant;* and social media reappropriation (Nigerian Twitter/ Instagram), amongst others, have profited from stirring vocal agency of peoples historically of the margins. This significantly erases repressive binaries within the construction of people. Beyond narrations of representations of the other and marginality, visibility as evident in the earlier mentioned dynamics of staring; stylistic expressions evident in alternative spellings of women as womxn or womyn; metaphors of self and other most prominent in class and gendered dichotomies, amongst others, are significant points of consideration in further examining postmodern performance and manipulation of marginality and otherness in the global backyard.

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